The MANUSCRIPT *of* ST. HELENA

Translated by
WILLARD PARKER

Bain

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President of the Bacon Society of America

"The Life of Napoleon Bonaparte has been written scores of times by many pens—hostile, friendly, and neutral, but until now the reader of English has never had an opportunity to read of the hopes and fears, the successes and failures, the joys and sorrows—yes, even the errors, of the Great Corsican as portrayed by himself. Heretofore the reader has been able to see only what Napoleon *did,* as viewed by the eyes of the outside world. Now, after all these years, we have the story of *why he did it. . . .*"

In such fashion the translator presents this remarkable narrative, here first given in English, and which from many evidences seems indubitably to be an actual autobiographical sketch by the Great Napoleon himself. The history of the manuscript reads like a romance. It is dated 1817, three years after Napoleon's banishment and four years before his death. In 1817 editions of "The Manuscript of St. Helena" appeared in France and England—both in French. Now after more than one hundred years the manuscript has turned up in America and the translation prepared. As to the actual authorship by Napoleon, many evidences confirm belief in it. For one thing, he mentions the manuscript in his will and disavows it—for obvious reasons as Mr. Parker points out. The interest of the narrative is certainly unflagging for the reader, and every page of it bears the stamp of the personality of Napoleon.

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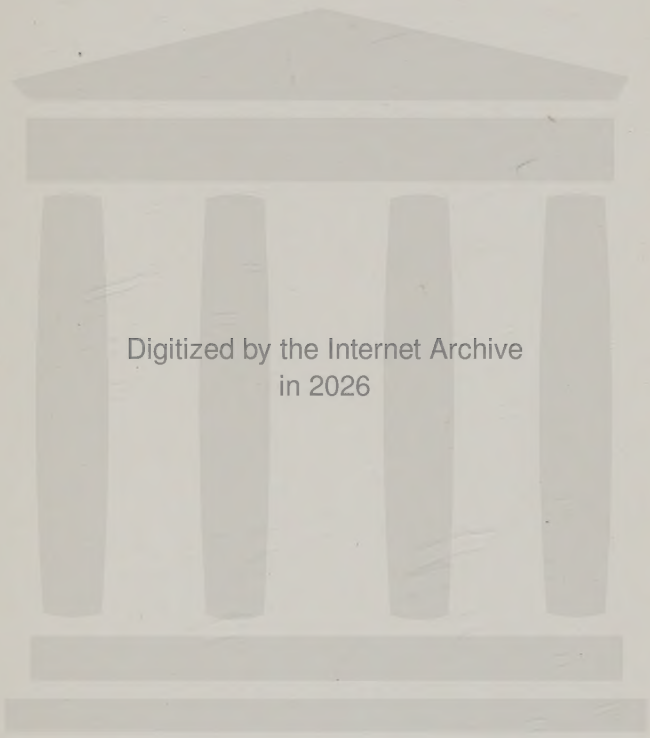
THE MANUSCRIPT OF ST. HELENA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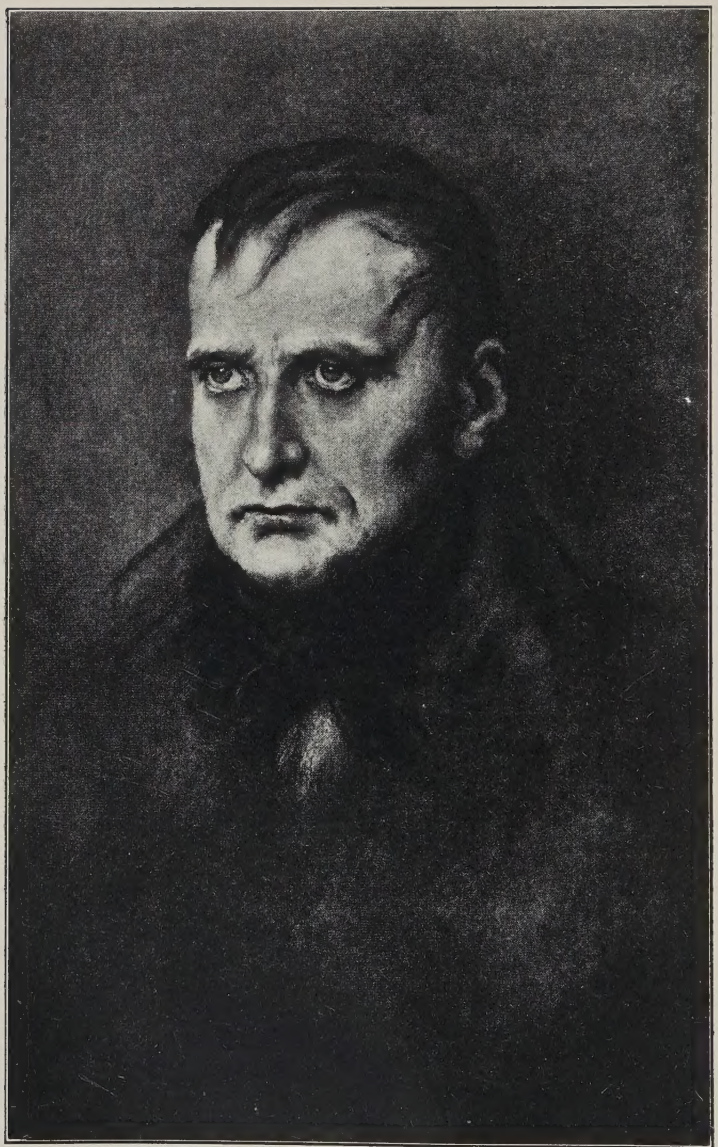

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THE LAST PHASE
(Napoleon at Saint Helena)

THE MANUSCRIPT OF ST. HELENA

TRANSLATED BY

WILLARD PARKER

PRESIDENT BACON SOCIETY OF AMERICA, TRANSLATOR OF FRANCIS BACON, LAST OF THE TUDORS.

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TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

The Life of Napoleon Bonaparte has been written scores of times by many pens —hostile, friendly and neutral, but until now the reader of English has never had an opportunity to read of the hopes and fears, the successes and failures, the joys and sorrows—yes, even the errors, of the Great Corsican as portrayed by himself.

Heretofore the reader has been able to see only what Napoleon *did*, as viewed by the eyes of the outside world. Now, after all these years, we have the story of *why he did it.*

Here are revealed his early ambitions—to be a Colonel of Artillery, nothing more; his tender love for Josephine to whom he says were due any happy moments his life had ever yielded him, and his sorrow and her noble resignation at the necessity of their

parting; his despair when the broken bridge at Ebersberg divided his army, and would have led to its destruction had the Austrians but grasped their opportunity; the real reason for his return from Elba, and his feelings at the wonderful reception accorded him—all are told in his own terse and simple language—for the French was not his mother-tongue—he learned it from the soldiers in the garrison in Corsica—and, running through it all—governing every act and dictating every purpose—the tremendous ambition of the Man of Destiny—not for himself, but for France.

His narrative holds the attention unflagging from beginning to end, and when one has perused and absorbed it one cannot but echo in agreement its last sentence: "History will say that a man to whom an entire people so devoted itself could not be as destitute of merit as the contemporaries pretended."

The story of the Manuscript itself, and

its wanderings, while only partially known, reads like a romance.

It is dated 1817, three years after Napoleon's banishment to St. Helena, and four years before his death. His only son was then six years old.

The document came to France in a secret and unknown manner, for he states at the outset that, if the English captured it, it would get no further. An effort was made to publish it in Paris, but the Bourbons were then in power, the would-be publisher was jailed, and his work destroyed.

The Manuscript itself or a copy of it (for there were doubtless good scriveners employed to preserve the important text in those dangerous times), escaped and reached England where a small French edition was struck off by an English publisher in the same year, 1817. In the advertising pages at the end of this French edition it is stated that an English edition will be published within three weeks. An English

translation, however, was never issued, and the reader will easily comprehend the probable reason for this omission, namely, Napoleon's scathing comments upon the British Ministry. The French edition follows the text of the Manuscript with some slight variations, some of which would seem to be errors and some pertinent corrections of slips of the writer's pen.

Here the history of the paper stops for many years. It is the writer's hope yet to discover some of its wanderings, but thus far we must admit a hiatus of seventy-five or eighty years.

During the 'nineties two ladies, giving their names as Madame and Mademoiselle Auziere came from "somewhere" and set up a modest housekeeping ménage in Elwood, N. J., U. S. A. They lived there very quietly for several years, making few acquaintances and no close friends. Early in the 1900's they gave up housekeeping, sold some of their belongings, and with their

more portable effects—their Lares and Penates—took board and lodging in the home of the local storekeeper. About 1907 they announced their intention of departing for an unknown destination, leaving their effects in storage with him. They were never again heard of, though their landlord advertised and inquired all over the United States and France for years in a fruitless effort to find them.

After fifteen years, owing to a change of business and failing health (he has since died), the storekeeper was reluctantly obliged to sell the goods for storage. The books, whose bindings showed wealth and whose contents showed culture, were sold to second-hand bookstores for a song, while the linen, laces, bric-a-brac, etc., were similarly scattered. At this juncture Mrs. Catherine Harkinson Meyer learned the facts and was able to secure the last of the articles, namely, a Bonaparte Album, some deeds and marriage contracts, not, however, Napoleon's,

and, last but not least, the Manuscript of St. Helena. She sent the manuscript to France in the custody of a learned professor, but the visit was without result. She then turned the document over to the present translator and recognizing its great historical interest and educational value, proceeded to put it into English for the benefit of American readers.

Pages have been photographed and sent to General Cartier, head of the handwriting and cryptographic department of the French Secret Service, who has lately put his official indorsement upon the deciphering of the Bacon-Shakespeare bi-literal, but he has thus far been unable to connect the penmanship with any of Napoleon's known secretaries on the island. For they are obviously not in his own handwriting, as the photographed facsimiles which we publish plainly show. It is well known that he could keep as many amanuenses simultaneously busy at their desks as he

could marshals in the field, but thus far, both original writer and possible copyist are mysteries.

Of the genuineness of the manuscript there can be no possible doubt, for Napoleon goes out of his way to mention it in his will. In this Testament, made in 1820 and published in full in Sir Walter Scott's *Life of Napoleon*, he says, "I disavow the Manuscript of St. Helena." He therefore knew of its existence—knew that it had passed out of his hands and reached Europe, and, doubtless feeling that its confessions and revelations were too intimate, would fain have taken off their edge by this disavowal. Also it must be remembered that the manuscript was written in 1817 or earlier, when the Imperial Exile may still have cherished hope of staging another return from Elba, whereas the will was made in 1820 when he knew that his end was approaching, "murdered," as he puts it, "by the British Ministry." This change in circumstances may

account for the disavowal. At all events this disavowal forms a most positive proof of the genuineness of the document, showing, as it does, that it existed in the St. Helena days, that Napoleon knew of it, and went out of his way to mention it.

Dr. Barry E. O'Meara, Napoleon's surgeon, in his "Voice from St. Helena," tells of extended remarks by Napoleon on the subject of this manuscript. According to O'Meara's report, Napoleon disclaimed responsibility for the document, but says: "I see by the sketch that they have published of my life that they take pains to ascertain the truth. Most of it is true; and it is difficult for me to imagine from whence they had their information on some parts of my early life, which were very little known to any except my own family."

With these few words of introduction, we let the manuscript speak for itself.

CONSHOHOCKON,
PENNSYLVANIA, U. S. A.

W. P.

ILLUSTRATIONS

The Last Phase . . . . . *Frontispiece*
Napoleon at Saint Helena

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Josephine de Beauharnais 112
First Wife of the Emperor Napoleon the First

Marie Louise of Austria 112
Second Wife of the Emperor Napoleon the First

Napoleon François Joseph Charles 150
Son of the Emperor Napoleon the First and
Marie Louise as a Child and as a Young Man

THE MANUSCRIPT OF ST. HELENA

I DO not write a commentary as the events of my reign are well enough known and I am not obliged to feed the public curiosity. I give the summary of the events because my character and my intentions may be strangely misrepresented, and I confine myself to appearing just as I have been to the eyes of my son and to those of posterity.

Such is the aim of this writing. I am forced to employ a roundabout method to make it public, since, if it fell into the hands of the English ministers, I know by experience that it would remain in their bureau.

My life has been so astonishing that the admirers of my power suppose even my childhood to have been extraordinary, but

they deceive themselves. My first years contained nothing singular. I was but an obstinate and curious child. My early education was pitiful like everything in Corsica. I learned French easily enough from the soldiers of the garrison with whom I passed my time.

I had good success in what I undertook, because I desired it and my will was strong and my character decided. I never hesitated, which gave me an advantage over others. The will depends upon the balance of the temper of the individual. It is not given to every one to be master of himself.

My spirit caused me to detest illusions. I have always discerned the truth at a glance. It is because I have always, better than others, seen to the bottom of things. The world has always existed for me in fact, not in law. Therefore, I have never in any respect resembled any one. I have always, by my very nature, been isolated.

I never understood what course I should

take in study, and, in fact, study served only to teach me methods. I obtained no results except from mathematics. The rest were of no value to me; still, I studied from self-love. Nevertheless, my intellect made its flights without my conscious interference. My faculties consisted solely in a great mobility in the fiber of my brain. I thought more quickly than others, so that there always remained to me time for reflection. In this consisted my profundity.

My head was too active to be amused by the ordinary diversions of youth. I was not an entire stranger to them but I sought elsewhere what would interest me. This disposition placed me in a species of solitude where I was alone with my own thoughts. This manner of existence has been habitual with me in all the situations of my life.

I took pleasure in solving problems. I found them in mathematics but I soon had enough of these, as the material horizon is

extremely limited; and I found them in the moral sphere. This is the work in which I best succeeded. This research became with me an habitual occupation. I owe to it the great progress which I have made in politics and in war.

My birth predestined me for the service; therefore I was placed in the military school. I obtained a sublieutenancy at the beginning of the Revolution, and I have never received a title with such pleasure as this one. The summit of my ambition was then bounded by the bearing on each shoulder the puff of an epaulet—to be Colonel of Artillery seemed to me the *ne plus ultra* of human grandeur.

I was too young at this time to take an interest in politics. I did not yet judge mankind in the mass. The disorder which reigned at this epoch neither surprised nor affrighted me, as I had not been able to compare it with any other. I was not yet discriminating.

I was in the Army of the Alps. This army did nothing which an army ought to do. It knew neither discipline nor war. It was a bad school. It is true we had no enemies to combat. We were only charged with stopping the Piedmontese from crossing the Alps, and nothing was so easy.

Anarchy reigned in the cantonments. The soldier had no respect for the officer, the officer had but little for the general. The latter were every morning dismissed by the representatives of the people. The army accorded only to these representatives the idea of authority. With the whole strength of the human spirit I scented from afar the danger of civil influence upon the military, and I knew how to protect myself from it.

It was not talent but loquacity which brought credit in the army. All depended upon popular favor which, in turn, was gained by vociferation. I studied war, not on paper, but in the field. I found myself

for the first time under fire in a little affair of tirailleurs on the slope of Mount Genevre. The bullets were fairly sprinkled and wounded some of our men. I experienced no emotion—it was not worth the trouble. I examined the action. It seemed evident to me that there was no intention on either side of gaining any result from this petty fusillade. They were firing only to satisfy their conscience and because such was the usage of war. This lack of purpose displeased me. The resistance gave me the idea. I reconnoitered the terrain. I took the gun of a wounded man and persuaded our captain—a good-natured fellow—to hold his fire while I took a dozen men and cut off the retreat of the Piedmontese.

It appeared easy to me to gain a height which dominated their position, passing through a copse of fir trees upon which our left rested. Our Captain became excited. His troops gained some ground, and, when they repulsed the enemy, I unmasked my

force. Our fire hindered their retreat. We killed some and took twenty prisoners. The rest escaped.

I have thus recounted my first deed of arms, not because it procured for me the grade of captain, but because it illustrated the secret of war. It showed me that it was easier than one believed to beat the enemy, and that the great art consisted in not wavering in action, and above all to attempt nothing but decisive movements, as it is thus that the soldier is inspired.

I had won my spurs. I believed in my experience, and thenceforth I felt a great attraction for a means which had been so successful. I thought of nothing else and applied myself to the solution of all the problems which a field of battle can offer. I would also have been willing to study war in the winter, but there was none. I searched on my recall the little that I had read in history, and I compared these accounts with the tableau which had been

before my eyes. I thus constructed for myself a theory of war which time has developed and never disproved.

I led this insignificant life until the siege of Toulon. I was then Chief of Battalion, and as such could have some influence upon the success of the siege. Never was army worse managed than ours. One did not know who commanded it. The generals did not dare to issue orders for fear of the representatives of the people. These had still more fear of the Committee of Public Safety. The commissaries plundered, the officers drank, the soldiers died of hunger, but they had recklessness and courage. Even the disorder inspired them to greater bravery than discipline. I therefore remained convinced that mechanical armies were useless, and they so proved themselves to us.

Everything was done at camp by motion and acclamation. Though this method was insufferable to me, I could not prevent it,

but proceeded toward my purpose without hesitation.

I may have been the only one in the army who had a purpose. I occupied myself solely in examining the position of the enemy and of ourselves. I compared his strength and morale with our own, and I saw that we possessed both and he neither. His expedition was a miserable freak, the disastrous end of which he must have seen in advance, and one is very weak when he sees defeat ahead. I sought the best points for attack. I calculated the part to be taken by our batteries and indicated the positions where they must be placed. The experienced officers regarded them as too dangerous, but one does not win battles with experience only. I insisted—I explained my plan to Barras. He had been a sailor. These brave fellows did not understand anything about war but they had intrepidity. Barras approved because he wished to complete the task. Moreover, the Convention

did not demand of him an account of arms and legs, but of success.

My artillerymen were brave and without experience. That is the best of all dispositions for a soldier. Our attack was successful. The enemy was intimidated. He dared not attempt anything against us. He foolishly let his bullets fall where they would, and they did no damage. The fire which I directed was more to the purpose. I put in plenty of zeal because I was looking for advancement. Moreover, I aimed at success for its own sake. I stood on the ramparts. One can only do well what he does himself. The prisoners advised us that all had gone to the Devil in the place. It was evacuated in a frightful manner.

We deserved well of the Fatherland. I was made General of Brigade. I was used, denounced, dismissed, debated by the intriguants, and the factions. I conceived a horror of the anarchy which was then at its height. I was never reconciled to it. The

government was to me in great antipathy. It was absurd, and it devoured itself. It was a perpetual revolution in which the ring-leaders did not even attempt to establish a permanent method.

A general, but without employment, I went to Paris, because only there could employment be obtained. I attached myself to Barras as I knew only him. Robespierre was dead. Barras played a rôle. It was necessary for me to attach myself to some one—to some thing. The affair of the Sections was in preparation. I had no great interest in it as I was occupied less with politics than with war. I did not think to play a part in this affair. But Barras proposed that I should command under him the force armed against the insurgents. I would have preferred, in the capacity of general, to be at the head of the troops rather than to be placed in the ranks of the Sections where I had nothing to do.

We had nothing to guard the riding

school, but a handful of men and two four-pounders. A column of sectionaires came to attack us to their sorrow. I directed the fire of our pieces. I pursued them. They threw themselves upon the terraces of St. Roche where but one piece could pass as the road was narrow. The fire was directed upon this column which was dispersed, leaving some dead The whole was finished in ten minutes.

This event, so small in itself, had great consequences. It stopped the Revolution from going backwards. I naturally attached myself to the party for which I had come to fight, and found myself allied with the cause of the Revolution. I began to consider it, and became convinced that it would succeed because it had with it public opinion, the reputation, and the boldness.

The affair of the Sections elevated me to the rank of General of Division, and procured me a sort of celebrity. As the victorious party was uneasy in victory it kept

me in Paris in spite of myself as I had no other ambition save to make war in my new rank. I then remained unknown on the streets of Paris. I had no relatives there. I had no use for society. I went only in the company of Barras where I was well received. It was there that I met a woman who had a great influence on my life, and whose memory will always be dear to me.

I was not insensible to feminine charms, but up to that time they had not spoiled me, and my character made me timid before them. Madame de Beauharnais was the first one to encourage me. She flattered me regarding my military talents. One day when I found myself placed before her this praise unnerved me. I naturally addressed myself to her. I followed her everywhere. I was passionately in love, and our friends were aware of it for a long time before I dared to speak.

My sentiments became known to Barras,

and he spoke to me of them. I had no reason to deny them. "In that case," said he, "you should marry Madame Beauharnais. You have rank and talents, but you are without fortune. Madame Beauharnais is alone, without relatives, and should marry you. She is a widow. This state does not count for anything nowadays. Woman no longer plays the rôle. They must be agreeable and spirituelle, but should marry in order to have an assured position. You have character, and you will make your way, as you will admit. Will you give me charge of this negotiation?"

I awaited her reply with anxiety. It was favorable. Madame Beauharnais gave me her hand, and if there have been moments of happiness in my life it is to her that I owe them.

My position in the world changed after my marriage. There was restored under the Directory a manner of social order in which I was placed in a sufficiently high position.

Ambition became reasonable to me. I could aspire to anything.

In point of ambition I had no other than to become Commander in Chief, as a man is nothing if he is not introduced by a military reputation. I believed myself sure to make mine as I felt the instincts of war. But I had not the right on which to found such a demand. It must be given to me. At that time this would not be difficult.

The army of Italy was trash as it had never been destined for anything. I thought to start a movement to attack Austria at the point where it felt most secure—that is, Italy.

The Directory was at peace with Prussia and Spain; but Austria, in England's pay, fortified its military state and made head against us on the Rhine.

It was evident that we would have to make diversion in Italy to shake Austria, to give a lesson to the petty princes of Italy, who were in league against us, and to give

to the war at least a decided color which it had not had up to that time.

This plan was so simple it pleased the Directory well, as they needed success to give them credit, and I hastened to present it for fear of being forestalled.

It met with no opposition and I was appointed General in Chief of the Army of Italy.

I departed to join it—it had received some reënforcements from the Army of Spain,—and I found it fifty thousand strong, deprived of everything save only good will. To put it to the test, a few days after my arrival, I ordered a general movement along the whole line. It extended from Nice to Savonne. This was at the beginning of the year 1796. In three days we carried all the Austrian posts which defended the heights of Ligurie. The enemy sharply attacked and rallied. We met him the tenth at Montenoll. He was beaten. The fourteenth we attacked him at Millesimo, and he was again

defeated. We separated the Austrians from the Piedmontese. The latter came to take position at Mondovi, while the Austrians retired upon the Po to cover Lombardy.

I defeated the Piedmontese. In two days I captured all the Piedmont positions, and we were within nineteen leagues of Turin, when I received an aid-de-camp who came to ask for peace.

I then regarded myself, for the first time, not as a simple general, but as a man called to influence the destiny of nations—I saw myself in history.

This peace changed my plan. It was not enough now to carry on the war in Italy, but to conquer it. I felt that in enlarging the scope of the Revolution, I would give a more solid foundation to its edifice. It was the best means of assuring success.

The Court of Turin had ceded all its strong points. It had given us their country. We then controlled from the Alps to

the Apennines, assured of our points of support, and tranquil as to our lines of retreat.

In such a fine position I went to attack the Austrians. I passed the Po at Plaisance and the Adda at Lodi. It was not without trouble, but Beaulieu retreated and I entered Milan.

The Austrians made incredible efforts to recover Italy. I was obliged to defeat their armies five times to bring them to the end.

Master of Italy, it was necessary to establish the system of the Revolution in order to attach that country to France by the principles of common interest. That is, it was necessary to destroy the old régime, and to create equality, as that was the mainspring of the Revolution.

I was, therefore, to have on my hands the clergy, the nobility, and all that fed at their table. I foresaw this resistance, and resolved to conquer it by the authority of arms, and without the aid of the mob.

I desired to become the protector of Italy,

and not her conqueror. I reached this end in maintaining the discipline of the army, punishing all revolts severely, and, above all, instituting the Cisalpine Republic. By this institution I satisfied the pronounced desire of the Italians—that of being independent. I gave them also great hopes. It depended only upon them to realize the same in binding themselves to our cause. They were allies which I gave to France.

This alliance between the two nations lasted a long time because it was founded upon mutual service and common interests. These two peoples have the same opinions, and the same motives. Without me they would have retained their old hatred.

Certain of Italy, I did not fear to venture to the center of Austria. I arrived in sight of Vienna and signed the treaty of Campo Formio which was a glorious act for France.

The party which I favored on the 18th Fructidor remained master of the Republic. I had favored it because it was mine and be-

cause it was the only one to make the Revolution go forward. But the more I mixed myself in affairs, the more I was convinced of the necessity of making the Revolution successful, as it was the fruit of the century and of public opinion. All that retarded its progress served only to prolong the crisis.

Peace was made on the Continent. We were no longer at war save with England, but for the lack of a field of battle this war left us in a state of inactivity. I was conscious of my powers. They were of a quality to place me in evidence, but they had absolutely no employment. I knew that to remain in view it was necessary to fix the attention, and to do this one must attempt extraordinary things. It was in virtue of this opinion that I planned the expedition to Egypt. It has been attributed to profound management on my part. I had no other purpose but that of not remaining idle after the peace which I had concluded.

This expedition was to give a grand idea of the power of France, and to attract attention to her Chief. It was to surprise Europe by its boldness. Other motives were not lacking for attempting it, but I had not then the least desire to dethrone the Grand Turk and still less to make myself Pasha.

I prepared for departure in profound secrecy. It was necessary to success, and it added to the singular character of the expedition.

The fleet set sail; I was obliged in passing to destroy the "Gentry" of Malta as they would serve only England. I feared that some old leaven of glory would cause these chevaliers to defend it and retard me. Luckily they surrendered themselves more shamefully than I had flattered myself that they would.

The battle of Aboukir destroyed the fleet and delivered the sea to the English. I understood from that moment that the expedition would not end save in catastrophe, as

any army which is not recruited always ends in capitulation sooner or later.

It was necessary to remain in Egypt, as there was no means of getting out. I decided to put a good face on a bad play, and succeeded well enough. I had a fine army. It was necessary to keep it occupied, and I achieved the conquest of Egypt by employing its time at that task. I there furnished to science the most beautiful field that was ever exploited.

Our soldiers were a little surprised to find themselves in the heritage of Sesotris, but they took the matter well. It was strange to see a Frenchman in the midst of those ruins; but they amused themselves.

Having nothing more to do in Egypt, I was curious to go to Palestine, and attempt its conquest. This expedition, having in it something of the fabulous, I permitted to lead me astray. I was ill informed of the obstacles which opposed me, and I did not take enough troops with me.

When I arrived there through the desert, I learned that forces had been assembled at St. Jean d'Acre. I could not despise them, and it was necessary to go there. The place was defended by a French engineer. I perceived this by the resistance. It was necessary to raise the siege. The retreat was difficult. I struggled for the first time against the elements, but I could not conquer them. On my return to Egypt, I received journals by way of Tunis. They apprised me of the deplorable state of France, the debasement of the Directory and the success of the coalition. I thought I could serve my country a second time. No motive retained me in Egypt. It was a wasted enterprise. Any general was good enough to sign a capitulation when time rendered it inevitable, and I departed with no other design than to reappear at the head of the armies and to bring them back to victory.

When I disembarked at Frejus my presence excited the enthusiasm of the people.

My military glory reassured all that *feared being beaten.* There were accessions on my journey. My path had the air of a triumph, and I understood on my arrival in Paris that I could be ALL in France.

The feebleness of the Government had brought it near to ruin. I found there anarchy. Everybody wished to save the country and proposed plans in consequence. I was the pivot of the conspiracies. I revived their confidences. There was no man at the head of all the projects who was capable of managing them. All counted upon me because they needed a sword.

I depended upon no one, and I was the master to choose the plan which best suited me. Fortune carried me to the head of the State. I came to find myself master of the Revolution. As I did not desire to be chief of it this rôle did not suit. I was then called to prepare the future destiny of France and perhaps that of the world.

But first of all it was necessary to make

war, to make peace, to calm the factions, to lay the foundations of my authority. It was necessary to stir up that clumsy machine which was called Government. I knew the weight of the resistance, and I would have preferred the simple means of war, as I loved the authority of the Commanding General, and the emotions of the battlefield.

I found myself at this moment more disposed to restore the military ascendancy of France than to govern her.

But I had no choice as to my destination, as I could easily see that the reign of the Directory was reaching its end; that it was necessary to put in its place an imposing authority to save the State; that there was nothing imposing but military glory. The Directory, therefore, could not be replaced unless by me, or by anarchy. This choice of France could not be doubtful. The public opinion in this regard was clearly for me.

I proposed to replace the Directory with

a Consulate, so far was I then removed from the idea of sovereign power. The Republicans proposed to elect two Consuls. I demanded three, as I did not wish to be put forward. The first rank in this trinity belonged to me by right. That was all that I wanted.

The Republicans defied my proposition. They saw in the triumvirate the elements of a Dictatorship. They lined themselves up against me. The presence of Sièyes could not reassure them. He had been charged with drafting a Constitution, but the Jacobins' fear of my sword was greater than their faith in the old Abbé.

All parties thus ranged themselves under two banners. On one side were found the Republicans who were opposed to my elevation. On the other, all France which demanded it. It was therefore inevitable at this time, for the majority always wins in the end. The first had established General Headquarters in the Council of five hun-

dred. They made a fine defense. It was necessary to gain the battle of St. Cloud to achieve this Revolution. For a moment I believed it would be done by acclamation.

The public desire was to give me the first place in the State. The resistance which opposed me was not disquieting, for it came only from people who, in public opinion, were worn out. The Royalists had not appeared. They had been taken in time. The mass of the Nation had confidence in me as they well knew that the Revolution could not have a better guaranty than mine.

I had but to take my place at the head of the interests in which they believed, because any retrograde movement would bring me back upon the terrain of the Bourbons.

It was necessary that all should be new in the nature of my power in order that all ambitions might be kept alive, but there was nothing definite, and that was its defect. I was, by the constitution, only the first mag-

istrate of the Republic, but I had a sword for a baton of command. And there was no incompatibility between my constitutional rights and the ascendancy which I held by my character and my actions. The public thought with me. Matters could not remain thus, and consequently took their course.

I found more courtiers than I had need of. Things came to an end. I had no difficulty in deciding as to the path which my authority should follow, but it had great bearing upon the material situation in France.

We had allowed ourselves to cease fighting. The Austrians had reconquered Italy, and destroyed my work. We had no longer the army to resume the offensive. There was no money in the treasury, and no way to replenish it. Conscription was no more exercised except at the good pleasure of the mayors. Sièyes had made us a cumbersome and babbling constitution which shackled everything. All that constituted the real

power of the State was destroyed. Nothing remained but its sources of weakness.

Forced by my position I believed it my duty to demand peace. I could do so in good faith as it was good fortune for me; later it would be but an ignominy.

Pitt refused it, and never has a statesman made such a stupid blunder, as the moment was the only one when the allies could conclude peace with security, since France, in asking peace, acknowledged herself beaten, the people arose from all their reverses, and would not consent to the opprobrium. The original states—[1]

Pitt refused it. He saved me a great failure, and he extended the empire of the Revolution over all Europe—an empire which even my fall did not succeed in destroying. It would have been confined to France if it had been left to itself.

It was then necessary for me to make war. Massena defended himself in Genoa, but the

[1] At this point there is a gap in the original manuscript.

Army of the Republic no longer dared to repass the Rhine or the Alps. It was necessary to reënter Germany and Italy to dictate peace a second time to Austria. Such was my plan, but I had neither soldiers, cannon, nor guns.

I called for conscripts—manufactured armies. I awoke the sentiments of national pride which is never more than dormant with the French. I organized an army of which one half wore but the garb of peasants. Europe laughed at my soldiers. They paid dearly for that moment of pleasure. Nevertheless I could not openly undertake a campaign with such an army. It was necessary at least to astonish the enemy and to profit by his surprise. General Suchet attracted it toward the gorges of Nice. Massena prolonged day by day the defense of Genoa.

I started and advanced toward the Alps. My presence, the grandeur of the enterprise reanimated the soldiers. They had no shoes,

but they all seemed to march with the advance guard.

At no time in my life have I experienced a sentiment equal to that which I felt on penetrating the gorges of the Alps. The echoes resounded with the cries of the army. They announced to me a victory, uncertain, but probable. I came again to see Italy, theater of my first arms, and my cannon were again slowly to engrave those rocks. My first grenadiers at last touched the summit of St. Bernard. They tossed into the air their caps garnished with red plumes, uttering cries of joy. The Alps were free and we poured down them like a torrent.

General L'Asne commanded the advance guard. He hastened to take Ivrée, Verceil and Pavie, and assured himself of the passage of the Po. All the army passed it without obstacle. We were all young then —soldiers and generals. We had our fortunes to make. We counted fatigue as nothing and danger still less. We were above

all care free, and sure of that glory obtainable only on the battlefield.

Upon the noise of my arrival, the Austrians maneuvered upon Alexandria. Gathered there at the moment when I appeared before the walls, their columns came and deployed before Bormida. I made them attack. Their artillery was superior to mine. They shocked our young battalions who lost some ground. The line was held only by two battalions of the guard, and the Forty-fifth. But I awaited corps which were marching in echelons. Dessaix' division arrived. The whole line rallied. Dessaix formed his column of attack and took the village of Marengo where rested the enemy's center. That great General was killed at the moment which decided an immortal victory.

The enemy threw themselves beneath the ramparts of Alexandria. The bridges were too narrow to hold them, and they crossed, a frightened mob. We captured masses of

artillery, and whole battalions. Forced back upon Tanaro, without communications, without retreat, menaced in their rear by Massena and by Suchet, and with nothing in front but a victorious army, the Austrians resorted to law. Melas begged a capitulation which was carried out with the formalities of war. Italy was entirely restored, and the vanquished army deposited its arms at the feet of my conscripts.

That day was one of the finest of my life, as it was one of the greatest for France. All was changed. She was now to enjoy a peace which she had won. She slumbered like a lion. She was to be happy because she was great. The factions seemed silenced; such grandeur stifled them. The Vendée was pacified. The Jacobins were forced to thank me for my victory as it was for their profit. I had no more rivals.

Common danger and public enthusiasm united the parties for a moment—safety divided them. Where there is no incontest-

able center of power there are always men who aspire to attract it to themselves.

That is what happened to me. My authority was only that of a temporary magistracy. I was not unshakable. People who had the vanity, believing that they had talents, commenced a campaign against me. They chose the Tribuneship as their battleground. There they aimed to attack me under the name of executive power. If I had yielded to their demands it would have ruined the State. They had too many enemies to divide their forces and lost time in words. A rude trial was made of them, but it did not suffice to silence them—this species of men who prefer the interests of their vanity to the welfare of the State. They amused themselves trying to increase their popularity by refusing taxes, by hindering the movement as well as the recruiting of troops.

With these methods we would have been the prey of the enemy in fifteen days. We

were not yet strong enough to risk it. My power was too new to be invulnerable. The Consulate would have ended like the Directory if I had not destroyed this opposition by a *coup d'état*. I dismissed the factious Tribunes. People called for their elimination. This word made my fortune. This small event, which has to-day been entirely forgotten, changed the Constitution of France, for it made me break with the Republic which was no longer of moment, when the national representation was no longer sacred. This change was forced into the situation when France found herself face to face with Europe. The Revolution had enemies too furious within and without to avoid the necessity of forming a Dictatorship as do all Republics in moments of danger. Balanced parties are not good save in time of peace. It was therefore necessary to strengthen that which had been given me each time a danger pursued, in order to prevent a relapse.

I would perhaps better have freely obtained this Dictatorship as I have been accused of aspiring to it. Every one has judged me by that which they call my ambition. I believe that that might have been better, as monsters are bigger far off than near. The Dictatorship would have had the advantage of not prejudging the future, of leaving opinions intact, and intimidating the enemy by showing him the resolution of France.

But I perceived that this authority would come of itself into my hands, and I had therefore no need to receive it officially. It was exercised in fact, if not by authority. It sufficed to pass the crisis and save France and the Revolution.

My task was then to terminate this Revolution by giving it a legal character, to the end that it might be legitimated by the public opinion of Europe. All Revolutions have passed through the same struggle. Ours could not be exempt, but must, in its

turn, take its right from the bourgeoisie. I knew before proposing it that it would be necessary to determine upon principles, consolidate legislation and destroy abuses. I believed myself sufficiently strong to succeed, and I was not disappointed.

The principle of the Revolution was the extinction of caste—that is to say, I respected equality. Legislation must regulate itself according to these principles. I made laws in this spirit. The abuses were shown in the existence of factions. I took no account of them, and they disappeared. They showed in the destruction of culture and I reëstablished it. As to the emigrants, I recalled them. The general disorder of the administration I regulated. The ruined finances I restored. In the absence of an authority capable of holding France, I gave it such authority, taking the reins of State.

Few men have done as many things as I did then. History will tell of a day which saw in France my advancement to the

throne, and which at the same time gave law to Europe.

I did not need to employ an arbitrary power to accomplish this great work. Its exercise perhaps might not have been refused me, but I did not wish it, as I have always detested the arbitrary. Above all things I love Law and Order. I have practiced them much, severely and precisely, but justly, because a law which knows no exceptions is always just. I have enforced them rigorously, as is the duty of the throne, but I have respected them. They have survived me; that is the recompense for my work.

All went forward as desired. The State was re-created, order was reëstablished, and I labored with ardor. But I felt that one thing was lacking in the entire system, and that was definiteness.

However, my desire was to see the Revolution a stable establishment. I saw clearly that this could not be accomplished without first vanquishing great resistance, as there

was necessarily great antipathy against the old régime and the new. They formed two masses whose interests were directly antagonistic. All the governments which yet subsisted by virtue of the ancient public right saw themselves exposed by the principles of the Revolution, and this in turn had no guaranty save in treating with the enemy or in being crushed if they refused recognition.

This contest must, as a last resort, decide the renewal of the social order of Europe.

I was at the head of a great faction which would destroy the system upon which the world had revolved since the fall of Rome. As such I was an object of hatred to all who wished to conserve the Gothic system. A character less complete than mine would have been able to temporize and let time decide the question.

But as soon as I saw to the bottom of the heart of the two factions, as soon as I saw that they divided the world as in the days of

the Reformation, I understood that any agreement was impossible between them, because their interests clashed too much. I understood that the more one cut short the crises the better it would be for the people. It was necessary for us to have half plus one of the people of Europe in order that the balance might swing to our side. I could only regulate the balance by virtue of the law of the strongest, as that is the only one which passes current with the people. It was therefore necessary that I should be stronger than all necessity, as I was not only charged with the government of France, but I also had to subject the world to it, to prevent the world from destroying it.

I never had a choice in the parts which I took. They were always dictated by events, because the danger was always imminent. The 31st of March had proved at what point it was to be feared, and whether it was easy to cause the old and the new régimes to live in peace.

It was very easy for me to see that as long as there was equality of strength between these two systems, there would be war between them—open or secret. The peace agreements which they signed would be only breathing spells. It was therefore necessary that France as the chief point of the Revolution should take measures to resist the tempest. It was necessary that there should be unity in the Government, that it might be strong; union in the Nation, that all means might lead to the same goal; and confidence in the people, that they might consent to the sacrifices necessary to secure the conquest.

But all was precarious in the system of the Consulate because nothing was in the right place. There was a Republic in name, a sovereignty in fact; a feeble national representation, a strong executive power; submissive authorities and a preponderant army. Nothing moves in a system of government where words clash with things.

The government, debased by the perpetual lies of which it made use, fell under the contempt inspired by everything that is false, because all that is false is weak. Moreover, one can no longer be shifty in politics; the people know too much and the parties talk too much. There is but one secret of governing the world, that is, to be strong, because in strength there is neither error nor illusion—it is the naked truth.

I sensed the weakness of my position, the ridiculousness of my Consulate. It was necessary to establish something solid to serve as the basic point of the Revolution. I was named Consul for life. It was a life sovereignty, insufficient in itself, as it placed a terminal date in the future, and nothing hurts confidence like a prevision of change; still it was passable for the moment when it was established.

In the interval afforded by the truce of Amiens, I had hazarded an imprudent expedition, with which I have been reproached,

and with reason. It was worth nothing in itself. I tried to retake San Domingo. I had good motives for attempting it. The allies hated France too much to remain inactive during the peace. It was necessary that we should always be formidable. The curiosity of the idle must be fed. The army must be kept always in motion to prevent its going to sleep, and finally I was very glad to try out the Navy.

For the rest the expedition was badly conducted. Wherever I was not personally present things went badly. Moreover, this reacted on itself as it was easy to see that the English ministry was going to break the truce. If we had reconquered San Domingo, it would only have been for them.

Each day increased my security when the events of the three Nivose showed me that I was on a volcano. This conspiracy was unexpected. It is the only one which the police did not baffle in advance. It had no confidants, hence its success.

I escaped as by a miracle. The interest shown in me indemnified me completely. The moment to conspire was badly chosen. Nothing was ready in France for the Bourbons.

The culprits were sought. I say with truth that I accused no one of it, but the Brutuses of the Corner, as in case of crime one was always disposed to give the honors to them. I was greatly astonished when the result of the inquiries came to prove that it was to Royalists that the people of Rue St. Nicaise owed being tossed into the air.

I believed the Royalists honest because they accused us of not being so. I believed them above all quite incapable of the audacity and villainy which was presupposed by such a project. For the rest it only appertained to a small number of highwaymen, a species praised, but little considered, in the party.

The Royalists, entirely forgotten after

the pacification of the Vendée, thus reappeared upon the political horizon. This was a natural consequence of the increase of my authority. I restored Royalty. I was hunting on their ground. They had no doubt that my monarchy would be like theirs. Mine was all in the fact—theirs all in the legal right. Theirs was founded upon custom—mine superseded it. It progressed in line with the genius of the century. Theirs pulled at the cord to sustain itself. The Republicans were frightened at the height to which circumstances carried me. It was in defiance of usage that I attained to such power. They feared that I would establish an old Royalty with the aid of my army. The Royalists fomented this trouble and were pleased to represent me as an imitator of the ancient monarchs. Other Royalists, more adroit, responded secretly that I was enthused in the rôle of Monk and that I would not take the trouble to restore the power save to do homage to the Bourbons

when there should be a State to be offered them.

The mediocre brains which did not measure my power added their faith to the disturbances. They accredited the Royalist party and decried me in public and to the army, as they began to have doubts of my attachment to their cause. I could not let such an opinion run, as it tended to bring on disunion.

It was necessary at all costs to undeceive France, the Royalists and Europe, that they might know what to hold concerning me. Any specific persecution against given propositions can only have a bad effect, because it does not attack the evil at its root. Moreover, this means became impossible in that century of solicitation when the advice of a woman stirred all France.

Unfortunately at this decisive moment there was offered to me one of those chance strokes which destroy the best resolutions. The police discovered little Royalist plots,

the headquarters of which were the other side of the Rhine. An august head appeared there implicated. All the circumstances of these affairs squared in an unbelievable manner with those which brought me to attempt a *coup d'état*. The execution of the Duc d'Enghien decided the question which agitated all France. It decided me irretrievably. I ordered it.

A man of much wit and who ought to know has said of this execution that it was more than a crime—it was a blunder. I know very well the value of these words. The offense of this unhappy prince was confined to some miserable intrigues with some old Barons of Strasbourg. He played his game, his intrigues were watched, they menaced neither France's safety, nor mine. He perished a victim of politics and an unheard-of combination of circumstances. His death was not a mistake, as all the consequences which I foresaw were verified.

War started again with England, be-

cause it was not possible to live long at peace. The territory of England is too small for its population. In order to live it needs monopoly of the four quarters of the world. War alone can procure this monopoly to the English, because they desire the right to destroy at sea, that being their safeguard. This war was slow for lack of ground on which to fight. England was obliged to flatter up the Continent, but it was necessary to give the harvest time to grow. Austria had received such rude lessons that the ministers did not dare propose war so soon, however great their desire for English money. Prussia fattened on her neutrality. Russia had had a fatal war experience. Italy and Spain had almost entered into my system. The Continent was brought to a halt.

For lack of something better I set on foot a project for a descent upon England. I never expected to realize it. Not that the matter of debarkation was impossible, but

the retreat was. There was not an Englishman but what would take up arms to save the honor of his country, and the French army, left, without succor and at their mercy, would either perish or surrender. I had been able to make the trial in Egypt, but in London it was too great a game to play.

As the threat did not cost me anything, since I did not know what to do with my troops, it was worth as much to keep them in garrison on the coast as elsewhere. Their very appearance compelled England to keep her powers on a ruinous footing which was so much gained.

In revenge they organized a conspiracy against me. I can give the credit for this to the emigrant princes as it was truly royal. An army of conspirators was put in motion, although we were informed in the course of twenty-four hours of all their confidences.

Nevertheless, as I desired to punish only

men who wished to upset the State, which is contrary to divine and human law, I was obliged to await the decrees collected against them with unexceptionable proofs. Pichegru was the head of the machinations. This man, who had more courage than talent, wished to play the rôle of Monk. He went to his end. These projects disquieted me little, because I knew their extent, and that public opinion would not favor them.

I soon learned that Moreau was concerned in this affair. This became more delicate, because of his colossal popularity. It was clear that he must be won. He had too great a reputation for us to be good neighbors. I could not be everything and he nothing. It was necessary to find an honest manner to separate us. It was found.

It has often been said that I was jealous of him. I was very little so of him, but he was much so of me, and he had reason. I esteemed him because he was a brave soldier. He had for friends all that did not

love me, that is to say, many people. They would have made a hero of him if he had perished. I did not desire to be what he was, that is, a nobody. I was successful. Absence makes loss. His friends forgot him, and he was thought of no more.

The other culprits required less management. They were all habitual conspirators of which it was always necessary to purge France, and we were successful as none have reappeared since then.

I was overwhelmed with solicitations. All the women and children in Paris were in the air. The good offices of all the world were in demand. I had the weakness to have some culprits sent to the state prisons instead of having justice done them.

I reproach myself to-day for this species of indulgence, because in a sovereign it is but a culpable weakness. There is but a single duty to perform face to face with the State. That is to observe the Law. All transactions with crime become a crime on

the part of the throne. The right of clemency must never have place toward the criminal. It is necessary to reserve it for the unhappy cases where conscience absolves while the Law condemns. Pichegru was found strangled in his bed. Those were not wanting who said it was by my orders. I was a total stranger to the event. I do not even know why I should snatch a criminal from his judgment. He was no more important than the others, and I had a tribunal to judge him and soldiers to shoot him. I have never in my life done anything useless.

My authority increased, because it had been menaced. Nothing was ready for a counter-revolution in France. France saw nothing in the plots but a means of bringing about anarchy or civil war. She desired to be preserved from these at all costs and she drew nearer to me. As I had promised to guarantee it, she would sleep in the shelter of my sword. The public desire—history

will not contradict me—called me to reign over France.

The Republican form could not last longer, because Republics are not made out of old monarchies. What France wanted was her grandeur. To sustain the edifice it was necessary to destroy the factions. I alone promised France all these conditions. France desired me to reign over her.

I could not become King. That was a used title. It carried with it customary ideas. My title must be new as the nature of my power. I had not inherited it from the Bourbons. It was necessary to be something much greater in order to sit on their throne. I took the name of Emperor because it was greater and less definite.

Never was a revolution so gentle as that which overthrew this Republic, for which so much blood had been spilled. It was the same thing, only the name was changed. This was because the Republicans did not fear the Empire. Moreover, revolutions

which do not displace interests are always gentle.

The Revolution was in fact terminated. It became immovable upon a permanent dynasty. The Republic did not satisfy public opinion. The interests were those of the immense majority, because, before all, the institutions of the Empire guaranteed equality. There existed the democracy only in fact and in right. Liberty had been under restraint only because it had been of no value in time of crisis. But liberty is not the custom of the enlightened class of the Nation. Equality unites all the world. It is for this reason that my power remained popular even in the reverses which crushed France. My authority did not rest, like the old monarchies, on the scaffolding of caste and intermediate bodies. It was direct, and had no support except in itself, as there was in the Empire but the Nation and me. But in that Nation all were equally called to public functions. The point of departure

was no obstacle to any one. The ascendant movement was universal in the State. That movement constituted my power.

I did not invent this system. It emerged from the ruins of the *Bastille*. It was but the result of civilization, and the customs which the times gave to Europe. Its destruction was attempted in vain. It maintained itself by the power of things, for the fact is always where the power is. And power was no longer in the nobility, since it had permitted the Third Estate to bear arms, and had not desired to be the sole military power of the State.

Power was no longer in the clergy, since the world had become Protestant, and had begun to reason. Power was no longer in the Government, precisely because the nobility and the clergy were no longer in a position to fulfill their functions, that is, to support the throne. Power was no longer in routine and prejudices, since it had been shown the people that there was no routine and no

prejudice. There had been dissolution in the body social long before the Revolution, as there was no longer agreement between words and things. The downfall of prejudice had laid bare the source of power. Their weakness had been discovered. They had in fact fallen in the first attack.

It was necessary to remake authority on another plan. It was necessary that the train of custom and prejudice should pass. It was necessary that the blindness which is called faith should pass. It had not inherited any rights. It was necessary that it should rest entirely upon fact, that is, upon force.

Thus I did not mount the throne as the heir of the ancient dynasties in order to sit luxuriously beneath the prestige of custom and of illusions, but to affirm the institutions which the people desired, to maintain the law in accord with precedent, and to render France formidable in order to maintain her independence. There was no delay in fur-

nishing me with an occasion. England was wearied by the sojourn of my troops on the coast. She desired at any cost to get rid of them, and sought with purse in hand for allies on the Continent. She must find some.

The old dynastics were afraid to see me on the throne. Whatever courtesy we showed, they saw well that I was not of them, as I reigned solely by virtue of a system which destroyed the altar which time had raised to them. I was myself a Revolution. The Empire menaced them as did the Republic. They feared it the more as it was so robust. It was accordingly their policy to attack me as soon as possible, that is, before I had gathered all my forces. The chances of the struggle which was to ensue, were of great interest. They showed me the measure of the hate which they had for me. I learned to distinguish those of the rulers whom fear influenced to associate with the system of the Empire from those who would die rather than come to an agreement

with it. This struggle must bring about new political combinations in Europe. I must succumb or become their arbiter. I had just reunited Piedmont to France, as it was necessary that Lombardy should lean upon the Empire. They cried out of ambition and prepared lists for the combat. This reunion served as a signal.

The battle would be severe. The Austrians reassembled all their forces. The Russians decided to reunite with them. The young Alexander had just mounted the throne. As children love to do the opposite to what their parents did he declared war, as his father had made peace. As we had as yet no quarrel with the Russians their turn had not come, but the women and the courtesans had decided. They thought to do an act of good taste as I was not of the *beau monde,* and they commenced without knowing the system to which Russia owes her grandeur.

The coalition never opened the campaign

more awkwardly. The Austrians thought to surprise me. This pretention did not succeed. They flooded Bavaria without waiting for the arrival of the Russians. They came with forced marches to the Rhine. My columns had left their camp at Boulogne, and traversed France. We crossed the Rhine at Strasbourg. My advance guard encountered the Austrians at Ulm, and overthrew them. I marched on Vienna at once. I entered there without obstacle. An Austrian General forgot to cut the bridge over the Danube. I crossed the river. I would have crossed it anyway, but I arrived the sooner in Moravia.

The Russians debouched alone. The remains of the Austrian army ran to take refuge under their colors. The enemy desired to hold Austerlitz. He was defeated. The Russians retired in good order, and left me the Empire of Austria. The Emperor of Austria requested an interview with me. I granted it in a moat. He asked for peace.

I granted it, for what should I do with his country? It was not up to the standard of the Revolution, but to diminish his power, I demanded cession of Lombardy, and the Tyrol for Bavaria, in order to strengthen my friends at the expense of my enemies. It was little enough. It was not a moment to dispute. The peace was signed.

I proposed the same to Russia at the same time. Alexander refused. The refusal was noble, as in accepting the peace he would accept the humiliation of the Austrians. In refusing he showed firmness in reverses and confidence in his fortune. This refusal showed me that the fate of the world depended upon us two.

The campaign recommenced. I followed the retreat of the Russians. I entered Poland. A new theater opened to our armies. I came to see this old land of anarchy and of liberty bowing beneath a foreign yoke; the Poles awaited my coming to succor them. I neglected the part which I

de n'écrire pas des commentaires, car les événemens de mon règne sont assez connus et je ne suis pas obligé d'alimenter la curiosité publique. Je donne la préférence de ces événemens, parce que mon caractère et mes intentions peuvent être étrangement défigurés, et je tiens à paraître tel que j'ai été, aux yeux de mon fils, comme à ceux de la postérité.

C'est le but de cet écrit; je suis forcé d'employer une voie détournée pour le faire paraître; car s'il tombait dans les mains des ministres anglais, je sais par expérience qu'il resterait dans leurs bureaux.

Ma vie a été si étonnante que les admirateurs de mon pouvoir ont prétendu que mon enfance même avait été extraordinaire; ils se sont trompés. Mes premières années n'ont rien eu de singulier; je n'étais qu'un enfant obstiné et curieux. Ma première éducation a été pitoyable, comme tout ce qu'on fait au corps; j'ai appris assez facilement le français par les militaires de la garnison avec lesquels je passais mon temps.

Je réussissais dans ce que j'entreprenais, parce que je le voulais. Mes volontés étaient fortes et mon caractère décidé; je n'hésitais jamais. Ce qui m'a donné de l'avantage sur tout le monde, la volonté dépend, au reste de la trempe de l'individu: il n'appartient pas à chacun d'être maître chez lui.

Mon esprit me portant à détester les illusions, j'ai toujours discerné la vérité de plein saut: c'est pourquoi, j'ai toujours vu mieux que d'autres le fond des choses. Le monde a toujours été pour moi dans le fait et non dans le droit. aussi n'ai-je ressemblé à peu près à personne; j'ai été par ma nature toujours isolé.

Je n'ai jamais compris quel parti je pourrais tirer des études, et dans le fait elles ne m'ont servi qu'à apprendre des méthodes. j'en ai relevé quelques fruits que des mathématiques; le reste ne m'a été utile à rien. Mais j'étudiais par amour propre

A Page of the Manuscript of Saint Helena

could take with the Poles and it is the greatest error of my reign. I knew, nevertheless, that it was necessary to strengthen the country in order to make it a barrier to Russia and a counterweight to Austria, but circumstances were not at this epoch favorable to the realization of this plan. Moreover, the Poles seemed to me little adapted to answer my purpose. They are a light and passionate people. With them all is done by imagination, and nothing by system. Their enthusiasm is violent, but they neither know how to regulate it nor perpetuate it. This nation carries its ruin in its character. Perhaps, giving the Poles a plan, a system, and a point of support, they would be able to form themselves in time.

Although my character never caused me to do things by halves, I would never have done anything but this in Poland, and I was taken ill. I advanced in the dead of winter against a northern country. The climate inspired no distrust in the soldiers. Their

morale was excellent. I had to fight an army, mistress of its own ground and of its climate. They awaited me at the Russian frontier. I had to go and seek them, because I could not let my troops linger in the bad camps. I encountered the enemy at Eylau. The affair was murderous and indecisive.

If the Russians had attacked us the next day we would have been beaten. But their generals lacked inspiration. They gave me time to attack them in Friedland. This time the victory was less indecisive. Alexander defended himself valiantly. He asked me for peace. It was honorable for both nations, as they measured up with equal bravery. The peace was signed at Tilsit. It was done in good faith. I attested it with the Czar himself.

Such was the issue of the efforts of the coalition against the Empire which I had just founded. It raised the glory of our arms, but it left the question undecided be-

tween Europe and me, as our enemies had only been humiliated but not destroyed or changed. We found ourselves at the same old point and in signing the peace I foresaw new wars. They were inevitable as long as the chance of war did not introduce new combinations, and as long as England had a personal interest in prolonging them.

It was necessary to profit by the transient repose which I had just allowed the Continent, and to enlarge the foundations of the Empire in order to render it firmer for the attacks to come. The throne was hereditary in my family. It thus began a new dynasty which time must consecrate, as it had legitimated all the others, because since Charlemagne no crown had been given with so much solemnity. I received it from the wishes of the people and with the sanction of the Church. My family called to reign must not remain in the ranks of society. It would have been unwise.

I was rich in conquests. It was necessary

to bind the State intimately to the system of the Empire in order to increase its superiority. There were no other bonds among the people than those of common interest. It was then necessary to establish a perfect communication between us and the conquered countries. To do this it was only necessary to change the old social order and to substitute ours in placing at the head of these new institutions sovereigns interested in maintaining them. I met this condition by placing my family upon the thrones found vacant.

Lombardy was the most essential of these states, because it must continually be exposed to the attentions of the House of Austria. I did not desire to give it the pleasure of placing one of my brothers on the throne. I only was capable of bearing the crown of iron and I placed it on my own head. In that way I gave more confidence to the Lombards, because I made their affairs my own. This new State took the name of the King-

dom of Italy, because the title was larger and appealed more to the Italian imagination.

The throne of Naples was vacant. Queen Caroline, after having flooded the pavements of Naples with blood, and delivered the kingdom over to the English, had driven them out again. A master was needed for this unhappy country to save it from anarchy and vengeance. One of my brothers ascended the throne. Holland had long since lost the energy which makes republics. She had no longer the force to play the rôle. She had given proof of this at the time of the disembarking of 1799. I could not suspect that they regretted the House of Orange from the way they had treated it. Holland seemed to have need of a sovereign and I gave her another of my brothers.

The youngest brother was young enough to wait. The fourth did not like to reign. He escaped it by neglecting his duty. Of the republics there remained only that of

Switzerland. It was not worth while to change the form to which they were accustomed. My authority in that country was limited to preventing them from cutting each other's throats. They did not show much gratitude for it.

In thus forming States allied to France and depending upon the Empire, I must at the same time reunite to the mother country portions of territory, in order to preserve the preponderance of the entire system. It was to this end that I reunited Piedmont to France and not to Italy. I reunited Genoa and Parma in the same way. These reunions had no value in themselves, as I could have made the people good Italians. I only made them mediocre Frenchmen. But the Empire was composed not only of France, but of the states of the family and foreign allies. It was necessary to conserve the proportion between these three elements. Each new alliance brought with it a new reunion. The public each time screamed about ambition.

My ambition never was to possess certain square leagues of land, more or less, but to make my cause triumphant.

Now this cause did not consist solely of public opinion, but of the weight which each party could put into the balance. The square leagues weighed in the balance as the world is composed of such things. I thus augmented the forces which I placed in motion. It required neither talent nor address to effect these changes. It required but an act of my will as these countries were too small to have such a thing in my presence. They depended for movement entirely on the Imperial system. The starting point of the system was France.

It was necessary to consolidate my work in giving to France uniform institutions of the new social order which she had adopted. It was necessary to create my world for myself, as I had been created for it. It was necessary to be legislator after having been warrior. It was no longer possible to draw

back the Revolution, as that would have been to submit the strong to the weak, which is against Nature. It was necessary, then, to grasp the spirit of it and to fit the analogous system of legislation. I believe that I accomplished this. The system will survive me and I have left to Europe a heritage which she cannot repudiate.

There was in reality nothing in the State but a vast Democracy, led by a Dictatorship. This species of government is well adapted to execution, but it is of a temporary nature, as it has but a life interest in the head—the Dictator. I must render it perpetual in building institutions in which to domicile it and permanent bodies politic, in order to place them between the throne and the democracy. I could accomplish nothing through the lever of habit and illusion. I was obliged to create anew with reality.

It was also necessary to base legislation upon the immediate interests of the major-

ity, and to create bodies politic with such interests, as self-interest in the most real thing in the world. I made laws whose action was immense but uniform. The principle was the maintenance of equality. It is so strongly imprinted in the codes that they alone suffice to conserve it.

I instituted an intermediate caste. It was democratic, because one could enter into it any time and anywhere. It was monarchic, because it could not die. This body was to replace in the new régime the service which nobility had served in the old—that is, to support the throne. But it in no way resembled it. The old nobility existed only by prerogative. Mine had only power. The old nobility possessed merit only because it was exclusive. All who distinguished themselves entered by right into the new. It was nothing else than a civic crown. The people attached to it no other idea. Each one merited it by his acts. All could obtain it at the same price so no one was offended.

The spirit of the Empire was the ascendant movement. Such is the character of revolutions. It moved the whole Nation. It raised itself of itself. It placed at the summit of the movement great recompenses. They were only given by public recognition. These high dignities were still conformed to the spirit of equality, as the plainest soldier could obtain them by distinguished service.

After the disorder of the Revolution, it was important to reëstablish order, as that is the symbol of power and permanency. The Administration and the Judges were essential to the State, as upon them depended public order, that is, the execution of the laws. I associated them with the movement which animated the people and the army. I associated them with the same recompense. I established an order which honored these administrators, because it had received from the soldiers a warrant of honor. I rendered it common to all who

served the State, because the first of all virtues is devotion to the Fatherland. I thus gave to the Empire a general binding tie. I united by their interests all classes in the Nation, because none were subordinated or excluded. There formed about me an intermediate body furnished by the élite of the Nation. It was attached to the Imperial system by its calling, by its interests and by its opinions. This numerous corps, clothed with civil and military power, was approved by the people, because it was gathered by lot from the ranks. They had confidence in it, because their interests commingled. This body was neither limited nor exclusive. It was in reality but a magistracy.

The Empire rested upon a strong organization. The army had been trained in the school of war. It had learned to fight and to suffer. The public functionaries were accustomed to execute the laws with strictness, as I would have neither arbitrariness

nor interpretation. Thus they functioned with method and rapidity. I had spread abroad a uniform impulse, because but a single word of command was given in the Empire. Thus all moved in this machine, but the movement operated only in the groove which I had prepared.

I stopped public waste in centralizing upon a single point the entire fiscal machine. Nothing was left vague on this part, because in coining money everything must be conserved. Above all I left nothing to the disposition of the semiresponsibilities of the provinces, because experience had proved to me that this abandonment served only to enrich petty embezzlers at the expense of the Treasury, the public, and the common weal.

I added to the credit of the State in not making use of credit. I substituted, for the system of loans which had ruined France, that of imposts which strengthened her.

I organized a conscription law on a larger scale, and one worthy only of a people who cherished its glory and its liberty, as its defense must be confided only to itself. I opened new communications and commerce. I reunited Italy to France by opening the Alps through four different routes. I undertook in this line that which seemed almost impossible. I caused agriculture to prosper by maintaining the protective laws of property, and in apportioning equally public charges. I added great monuments to those which France already possessed. They must serve as witnesses to her glory. I thought that they would uplift the souls of our descendants. The people attached themselves to these noble images of their history.

My throne never shone but with the brilliance of arms. The French love greatness as to appearance. I decorated palaces. I reassembled a numerous court. I gave it an austere character. All others had been ill assorted. There was no amusement at my

court, where all was consecrated to the greatness of the State, hence the women played there but a shabby rôle. Therefore they always detested me. Louis XV was more their style.

My work was hardly half finished when a new enemy presented himself in the lists. For two years Prussia had remained at peace, for which France was grateful. The allies, however, wished her much ill. They injured her but she prospered. Her neutrality had been above all most essential to me in the last campaign. To assure me of it overtures had been made of a cession of Hanover. I thought that such an overture well compensated for a little violation of territory, which I myself had permitted, in order to accelerate the march of one of my divisions which was urgently needed on the Danube.

England having rejected the peace proposition which we had sent her according to our custom on signing that of Austerlitz,

Prussia demanded the cession of Hanover. I asked nothing better than to make them the present, but it seemed to me that the time had come for this court to declare itself frankly and enter once for all into our system. I could not conquer everything with the sword. Policy must also give us allies and the occasion seemed propitious. But I perceived that Prussia had quite other intentions, and that she considered me amply paid by her neutrality. From that moment it became absurd to aggrandize a country upon which I could not depend. I became out of patience. I had only calculated that in giving some territory to Prussia I would compromise her—that is to say assure myself of her. I refused everything and Hanover received another disposition. The Prussians made a loud outcry because I would not present to them what belonged to others. They complained of my petty violation of the previous year. They bethought themselves all at once that they were the depositaries of the

glory of Frederick the Great. They grew hot headed. A species of national movement agitated the Prussian nobility. England sent her her hire which she quite consistently accepted.

If the Prussians had attacked me when I was taking in the Austrians and the Russians, they could have done me much harm, but it was so absurd to declare, at an inopportune time, a war which resembled a students' mutiny, that it was a long time before I took it seriously.

Nevertheless, nothing could be more true, and it was necessary to reënter the campaign. I depended upon beating the Prussians, but I expected to take more time for it. I took measures against the aggression which could have been raised against me, and which I suspected, but I had no need of them. By a strange chance the Prussians did not hold out two hours. By another chance their generals never thought to defend the places which would have taken me

three months to capture. In a few days I was master of the country.

The quickness of this rout proved to me that this war had not been popular in Prussia. I should have profited by this discovery in organizing Prussia in our manner, but I did not know how to do so.

The Empire had acquired an immense prestige by the battle of Jena. The public began to regard my cause as won. I perceived this in the manner which people assumed toward me. I began to believe so myself, and this good opinion caused me to commit errors.

The system upon which I had founded the Empire was the foe of the ancient dynasties. I knew that between them and me the war must be mortal. It was therefore necessary to take rigorous means to render it as short as possible in order to spare the sufferings of the people and the kings. Thus I would have to change in part the form and the persons of all the States which fell into our

hands, because one does not accomplish revolutions by keeping the same men and the same things. I was sure, if I conserved these governments, to have them against me. They were the enemies which I would resuscitate. If, on the other hand, I would keep these governments for the lack of better, it was necessary to render them accessaries to my power, in making them accept territory and titles with my alliance.

In following both these plans according to occasion, I would have extended rapidly the frontiers of the Revolution. Our alliances would have been solid because they would have been made with the people. I would have brought them the advantages with the principles of the Revolution. I would have removed from them the flail of war with which they had been persecuted for twenty years and which in the end made them revolt against us. It is to be believed that the majority of the nations of the Continent would have accepted this great alli-

ance, and Europe would have been reëstablished upon a new plan in accord with the state of its civilization.

I reasoned well but I acted to the contrary. Instead of changing the Prussian dynasty as I had anounced I restored their states to them after having parceled them out. Poland felt no gratitude to me for only giving back freely that portion of territory which Prussia had seized. The kingdom of Westphalia was dissatisfied at not obtaining an advantage, and Prussia was furious at what I had taken from her and swore me eternal hatred. I imagined, I know not why, that sovereigns, deposed by right of conquest, would be thankful for the portion that was left them. I imagined that after all their reverses they would be able in good faith to ally themselves with us, because such would be the safest plan. I imagined that I could thus extend the alliances of the Empire without loading myself with the odium which the Revolution brought after it. I

found at last that this was a great rôle to play—this taking and giving of crowns. I learned my lesson. I was deceived, and blunders are never pardoned.

I wished to correct at least that which had been committed in Prussia, by organizing the Federation of the Rhine, because I hoped to hold the one by the other. To form this Confederation, I enlarged the states of some sovereigns at the expense of a rout of petty Princes, who were only useful to eat up the money of their subjects without power to do them any good. I thus attached to my cause these small sovereigns of whom I augmented the number, by the advantage of their aggrandizement. I had conquered in spite of them, but they found that they had made a good bargain, and they voluntarily made common cause with me and remained as faithful as they could.

The Continent thus found itself pacified for the fourth time. I had extended the domain and the prestige of the Empire. My

immediate power extended from the Adriatic to the mouth of the Weser, and my power of public opinion over all Europe. But Europe thought as I did, that this pacification was but a provisional work, because it possessed too many elements of resistance, and in treating with these oppositions, as I mistakenly did, I only put off the trouble. The vital principle of resistance was in England. I had no means of attacking her body to body, and I was sure that the war would be renewed on the Continent as soon as the English ministry should have the wherewithal to pay the freight.

The matter might last a long time, because the benefits of war feed war. It was a vicious circle, the result of which would be the ruin of the Continent. It was therefore necessary to find a means to destroy the benefits which maritime war brought to England, in order to ruin the credit of her ministry. To this end the Continental system was proposed to me. It seemed good to me. I

accepted it. Few people understood this system. They obstinately persisted in seeing no other end but the raising of the price of coffee. This seemed to overbalance all other consequences.

It was to ruin England's commerce. In that it did its work poorly, because it produced, like all prohibitions, an advance in price which is always an advantage to commerce, and because it could not be established with sufficient completeness to prevent smuggling. But the Continental was yet to serve to distinguish between our friends and our enemies. We could not deceive ourselves. Attachment to the system was attachment to our cause. It was its ensign, its palladium.

The system thus described was indispensable at the moment when I established it. It is necessary that a great empire not only have the tendency to direct its general politics, but its commercial affairs must also have the same tendency. It needs a pathway for

industry as for everything else in order to enable it to move and to advance; but France did not yet have it when I traced its pathway in giving it the Continental system. The economy of France was carried by the Revolution toward the Colonies and the commerce of exchange. It was then the mode. It had had great success. To whatever extent this success has been extolled, it had nevertheless no other result but to cause the ruin of the State's finances, the loss of credit, the destruction of its military system, the loss of its consideration abroad, the languishing of its agriculture. This success finally brought it down to signing a commercial treaty which turned over its victualing to the English.

France had indeed some good seaports and some merchants whose fortunes were colossal. The war had destroyed without return the maritime system. The seaports were ruined. No human power could restore what the Revolution had destroyed. It

was necessary then to give more impulse to traffic in order to afford life to the industry of France. There was no other way to reach it but that of taking from England the monopoly of manufacturing industry so as to make this industry the general economical tendency of the State. It was necessary to create the Continental system. This system, and nothing less, was needed, inasmuch as it was necessary to give an enormous bounty to manufacturers, to get them to engage in commerce and make the advances required by the *ensemble* of a manufacturing establishment.

It proved out in my favor. I displaced the seat of industry, causing it to cross the sea. It made such great strides on the Continent that there was no more competition to fear. If France would prosper she must preserve my system, changing its name. If she would fall she had but to recommence maritime enterprises as the English would destroy them in the first war. I was forced

to carry the Continental system to the extreme, because it had for its aim, not only to do good to France, but harm to England. We could not receive the colonial commodities except by her intervention. Such was the flag which they must assume in order to navigate. It was therefore necessary to receive as little as possible. There was no better way to accomplish this than to raise the price beyond measure. The political purpose was fulfilled. The State finances profited thereby, but I grieved the good women and they avenged themselves. Experience showed every day that the Continental system was good, as the State prospered in spite of the burdens of war. These imposts carried credit at par with interest on the money. The spirit of improvement was shown in agriculture as in manufacture. The village roads were renewed like the streets of Paris. The canals facilitated internal transportation. Every week some new improvement was invented. I had

sugar made from turnips and soda from salt. The development of science kept pace with the march of industry.

It would therefore have been foolish to renounce the system at the moment when it was bearing such fruits. This necessity influenced the politics of Europe in that it compelled England to maintain a state of war. From that moment war assumed in England a more serious character. She agitated for it as a public need—a necessity of existence. The English no longer depended upon auxiliaries for their protection. They charged themselves with it and arose in great masses. The struggle had not been perilous to them until that time. I received this impression in signing the decree. I supposed that there would be no more rest for me but that my life would be spent in fighting opposition which the public could not see, but of which I alone would penetrate the secret, because I am the only one whom appearances have never deceived.

I flattered myself that I would remain master of the future by means of the army which I had created, whose success had rendered it invincible. I never doubted its success. Its movements were easy as we had renounced the system of camps and magazines. It could be transported on the instant in any direction, and above all it arrived at a consciousness of its superiority. With such soldiers who is the general that would not have loved war? I love it, I admit. Nevertheless, since the battle of Eylau I never felt in myself the plentitude of confidence, and the contempt for the future to which I owed my first successes. I distrusted mysef. This distrust carried an uncertainty in my decisions. My humor was altered; my character deteriorated. I controlled myself, but that which is not natural is not perfect.

The Continental system had decided the English to fight us to the death. The north was held by my garrisons. The English had

no other avenues to us except smuggling. But Portugal was in her power, and I knew that Spain favored their commerce under the protection of neutrality.

In order that the Continental system should be good for anything it was necessary that it should be complete. I had established in the north prices on a few things. It was necessary to respect them in the midlands.

I demanded of Spain passage for an army corps, which I wished to send to Portugal, and they granted it. At the approach of my troops the Court at Lisbon embarked for Brazil, and left me their country. It was necessary to establish a military road across Spain. This road placed us in rapport with Spain. Until then I had never thought of this country because of its uselessness. The political condition of Spain was disquieting. She was governed by the most incapable of sovereigns—a brave and worthy man whose energy was subordinated

in obedience to his favorite. This favorite, without character and without talent, possessed no further energy than to demand wealth and dignities without cessation.

The favorite remained devoted to me because he found it advantageous to govern under the shadow of my alliance, but he had managed so badly that his credit in Spain had fallen, and he could no longer get himself obeyed there. His devotion was useless to me. Public opinion had advanced in Spain in a sense contrary to that of all Europe. The people, who had elsewhere been raised to the heights of the Revolution, had there remained far below it. The light had not penetrated as far as the second stratum of the Nation. It had been arrested upon the surface, that is, upon the higher classes. These knew of the degradation of their country and blushed to obey a government that ruined it. They were called the Liberals. Thus the revolutionaries in Spain were those who had to lose by the Revolu-

tion, and those who had to win would not hear it spoken of. The same contrariness had taken place equally in Naples. It caused me to make many mistakes, as I had not the key to the situation.

The presence of my troops in Spain caused there an event. Each interpreted it in his own manner. Heads were filled with it. The fermentation commenced. I was informed of it. The Liberals were sensible of the humiliation of their country. They thought to prevent its ruin by a conspiracy. This conspiracy thrived. Its limit was to make the old king abdicate and to thrash his favorite soundly. Spain at bottom gained nothing by the change, as the son whom they put on the throne was no better than his father. I know on what I can rely.

The conspiracy had hardly succeeded when the conspirators were frightened at their own audacity. They were afraid of me—of themselves—of everybody. The

monks did not approve of the violence which they had done to the old king, because it was illegal. I disapproved equally from another motive. Terror entered into the new Court —revolt into the people—anarchy into the State. The force of things brought about a change in Spain, since a revolution was going to begin there in fact. This revolution could not be of the same nature as that in France, because the elements were different. Until then Spain had not had any guidance, because she had no chief at all, and no progressive party. There was nothing but a suspension of authority—a subversion of power—a disorder—that was all.

No other fate could be foreseen for Spain. If there is nothing but a savage and ignorant people, this revolution could accomplish nothing without rivers of blood, and long calamities. Moreover, what did the men ask who wished a change in Spain? It was not a revolution like ours. It was a capable government, an authority in the case to take

away the rust which covered their country, that it might regain outside consideration and inner civilization. I would give them both the one and the other by taking possession of the revolution at the point to which they had brought it. Spain was to be given a dynasty that was strong, because it would be new, and which was enlightened because it would be exempt from prejudice. Mine united these qualities. I thought then to give it this additional throne.

In this regard, the most difficult part had been done, that is, the elimination of the old dynasty, but the Spaniards had let the old king abdicate and would not recognize the new. All seemed to presage that Spain, to avoid anarchy, would submit to a sovereign who would find himself armed with a prodigious lever. She would thereby enter without effort into the radius of the Imperial system, and, however deplorable might be the social state of Spain, this conquest could not be disdained.

As it was necessary to see the matter at first hand in order to gain a just idea of it, I started for Bayonne, where I had invited the old Court of Spain to report. As it had nothing better to do it came. I had also invited the new king, whom I did not expect to come as he had something much better to do. I thought, from his not reporting, either in my presence or that of his father, Ferdinand would either take up with the party of the revolt, or with that which would gain America. He took neither one nor the other. He came to Bayonne with his preceptor, and his confidants, and left Spain to its first occupant. This step alone gave me the measure of this court. I had hardly conferred with the chief conspirators when I perceived their ignorance of their own situation. They had no party organized for anything. They did not foresee anything. They managed their politics like the Fifteen Twenty. I had hardly seen the sovereign whom they had put upon the throne when I

was convinced that Spain could not be left in such hands.

I then decided to accept the abdication of this family and to place one of my brothers on the throne which its masters had just abandoned. They had descended so easily that I believed he would ascend equally so. In fact nothing seemed to oppose. The Junta of Bayonne had recognized him. No legal power remained in Spain to oppose the change of reign. The old king had shown himself grateful that I had taken his son's throne, and he was to retire to Compiègne. His son was conducted to the château of Valencia, where the necessary preparations had been made. The Spaniards knew how far to depend on their old king. He left no regrets—no memories. But his son was young, his reign was a hope. He was unhappy. They made him a hero. Public imagination mounted in his favor. The Liberals cried out of national independence —the monks of illegitimacy. All the na-

tion armed itself under these two banners.

I grant that I was wrong to place this young man in confinement in Valencia. I should have permitted all eyes to see him in order to undeceive those who were interested in him. I was wrong, above all, not to have permitted him to remain on his throne. Things would have gone from bad to worse in Spain. I would have acquired the title of protector of the old king in giving him an asylum. The new government would not have failed to compromise itself with the English. I would have declared war in my name as well as in the capacity of attorney-in-fact for the old king. Spain would have confided her army to the chance of that war, and since they would have been beaten, the nation, which they would have surrendered through right of conquest, would not have even thought of murmuring, because in disposing of conquered nations one follows only accepted usage.

If I had been more patient I would have

followed this course, but I believed that, the result being the same, the Spaniards would have accepted *a priori* a change of dynasty which the disposition of affairs rendered inevitable. I committed a blunder in this enterprise because I suppressed the gradual steps. I had just displaced in an offensive manner an old dynasty; hence the Spaniards, wounded in their pride, would not recognize what I had put in its place. As a result there was no authority anywhere—that is, it was found everywhere. The nation at large regarded itself as charged with the defense of the State, and inasmuch as it had no armies, nor any authority on which this defense could be placed, every one took the responsibility. It created anarchy. I found against me all the resources that there were; I had the whole nation on my hands.

This nation, whose history is signalized only by avarice and ferocity, was little formidable before an enemy. It fled at the sight of our soldiers, but it attacked them in

the rear. They revolted. They had arms at hand. They used reprisals. To have answered reprisals with reprisals would have made this war become an abyss of atrocity. I thought it would imprint upon my reign a character of violence, that it would be a dangerous example to the people and fatal to the army; but once this war had begun, it was not possible to abandon it. The most trifling reverse inflamed my enemies and put Europe again in arms. I was obliged to be always victorious.

I did not delay putting it to the proof.

I had gone to Spain to hasten events and to look over the ground upon which I was to leave my brother. I occupied Madrid and destroyed the English army which came to its aid. My successes were rapid. Fear was at its height. Resistance was coming to an end.

There was not a moment to lose, and not one was lost. The English ministry armed Austria. She was always as active in find-

ing me enemies as I was in beating them. The Austrian project was managed this time very adroitly. I was surprised. I cannot but render justice to those who deserve it. Our armies were scattered to Madrid, to Naples, to Hamburg. I was myself in Spain. It was possible that the Austrians would obtain some successes at the outset. These successes might lead to others. With this kind of people it is the first step that counts. They would be able to tempt Russia and Prussia, retemper the courage of the Spaniards and restore popularity to the English ministry.

The Court of Vienna has a tenacious policy which events never disarrange. It was a long time before I had divined the cause. I perceived at last, but too late, that this state had no such deep roots but what the good fellowship of government was allowed to degenerate into an oligarchy managed solely by a hundred nobles. They owned the land; they had taken possession of the

finances, politics, war, by means of which they were masters of all, and left nothing to the court but the signatures.

But oligarchies never change their opinions, because their interests are always the same. What they do they do badly, but they always exist, because they never die. They never achieve success, but they support reverses admirably because they support them in company. Austria owed three fourths of its safety to this form of government. She decided on the war which she was going to declare on me.

I had not a moment to lose. I left Spain brusquely and hastened to the Rhine. I rallied the first troops which I found under the command of Prince Eugene. I had already ceased fighting in Italy. I sent him reënforcements. The kings of Swabia and Bavaria loaned me their troops. I went to fight the Austrians with them at Ratisbonne, and then marched on Vienna. I followed with forced marches the right bank of the

Danube. I counted on the successes of the Viceroy to effect our junction. I would anticipate the Austrians at Vienna, cross the Danube there, and place myself in position to receive the Archduke. The plan was well conceived but it was imprudent, because it had to do with an able man, and I had not enough troops. But fortune was with me. The Archduke made in retaliation a very good march. He divined my plan and gained the advance. He marched rapidly on Vienna by the left bank of the Danube, and took position at the same time as I. To my knowledge this is the only good maneuver which the Austrians ever made.

My plan of campaign was defective. I was in the presence of a formidable army. It divined my maneuvers and forced me to inaction. Nothing but a big affair could terminate the war. It was I who must attack. The Archduke had reserved that rôle for me. It was not an easy one to play as he was in position to receive me.

By unexpected good fortune the Archduke John, instead of holding the Viceroy at all costs, allowed himself to be beaten. The army of Italy drove him back to the other side of the Danube. We on our part were all on the right side, but as we did not wish to wait forever, it was necessary to complete the action. I had bridges thrown over. The army moved. The corps of Marshal Massena debouched first. It commenced firing when an accident broke the bridges. It was impossible to repair them soon enough to succor him. He was attacked by the enemy's army. The troop defended itself with heroic valor as it was without hope. Munitions were lacking; they were going to perish, when the Austrians ceased their fire, believing that each day sufficed for its own trouble. They resumed position at the decisive moment and relieved me of a cruel pang. We could have done no less than experience a reverse. I perceived the effect upon me of public opin-

ion. My defeat would be published and my retreat announced. The details of it would be given. I foresaw my ruin. The Tyrolese would revolt. It would be necessary to send an army to Bavaria. Parties would be armed in Prussia, and in Westphalia and overrun the country to rouse it. The English would fit out an expedition against Antwerp which would succeed in spite of their bungling. My position would grow worse every day. At last I succeeded in throwing a new bridge across the Danube, and the army crossed the river on a frightful night. I was present at the passage because it gave me some anxiety. It happened as I wished. Our columns had time to re-form, and this great day opened under favorable auspices. The battle was fine because it was disputed. The Austrian generals, however, did not put forward great efforts of genius because they commanded large masses on a flat terrain. It was long defended. The bravery of our troops, with a bold maneuver of MacDon-

ald decided the day. Once broken, the Austrian army defiled in disorder on a long plain where they lost many men. I followed them rapidly into Moravia. There was no other course but to sue to me for peace. I granted it for the fourth time, and I hoped it would be durable, because one tires of being beaten as of anything else, and because a sufficiently strong party in Vienna voted for an alliance with the Empire. I wished for peace as I sensed the need of according some relief to the people because, instead of enjoying the advantages of the Revolution, they had, up to the present, known only its ravages. We were no longer their protectors as at the beginning of the war, and, to accustom the public opinion of Europe to the nature of my power, it was necessary to not always show it in a hostile aspect.

The enemy party in revenge assured the crowd that they armed themselves only to wield the flail of war, and cheapen English

merchandise. These insinuations made proselytes. The war rendered the Revolution unpopular. For that reason I desired peace, but it was necessary to obtain the consent of the English ministry. Austria undertook to ask it. It was refused. The refusal disquieted me. England must have resources of which I did not possess the secret. I tried to discover it but in vain.

Instead of disarming, I was forced to rest on my arms, and to weary Europe. I was, moreover, more angry that the allies had all the honor of the struggle if I achieved the success. But they had the air of innocence which gives the air of defense to things which are called legitimate, because they are old. I had in turn the air of the aggressor, because I fought to destroy them and make them new. I thus carried all the weight of the accusation. Nevertheless, the war of the Revolution had only been the result of the opposition of Europe. It was the crisis which changed customs. It was the inevit-

able consequence of merging one system into another. If I had been the inventor of the system I would have been guilty of the wrong which it did. But it was not invented by any one. It was but the product of the march of time which prepared this Revolution secretly as it did that of Protestantism with the evils which followed. The war depended upon me no more than upon the allies. It depended upon the manner in which creation made the human race.

England continued the war without auxiliaries, but not without allies, as she had, to make head against me, all the enemies of the Revolution. We had ground in Spain to fight. I returned my troops there, but I did not go back there myself. This was wrong, as affairs are only done well by oneself, but I was weary of this bustle, and I was considering from thence a project which would give to my reign a new character.

There was raised before me another embarrassment of which I had no apprehen-

sion. The north was occupied by my troops. The English were not strong enough to attack me at this point. It was in the Mediterranean that their fleet assured them of superiority. They possessed Malta and enjoyed Sicily, the coasts of Spain, Africa and Greece. They desired to profit by this advantage. They tried to raise a movement of reaction in Italy to make it a second Spain, if the thing were feasible. There were malcontents everywhere, as I had never been able to place everybody in full rights. There were some of them in Italy as elsewhere. The clergy loved me not, because my reign had destroyed theirs. The pious detested me from their example. The lower classes shared their sentiments, because the clergy still influenced them in Italy. The headquarters of this opposition was established in Rome, as the only city in Italy where they hoped to get away from my surveillance. They communicated from there with the English, provoked revolt, and in-

sulted me in clandestine pamphlets; they scattered false rumors. They recruited for the English. They bribed the bandits of Cardinal Ruffa to assassinate the French. They tried to transfer the Ministerial Palace to the police of Naples. It became evident that the English had a plan in Italy and that they were fomenting trouble there.

I could not permit that. I must not suffer the French to be insulted and assassinated. I contented myself with making complaint of various offenses to St. Siège. I received courteous replies to get me to bear my wrongs in patience. I was not naturally patient. I saw that there was a decided ill will against us, and that it was necessary to make a front to prevent the explosion. I attacked Rome with my troops.

Instead of arresting the trouble, this measure, somewhat violent, irritated public spirit. I maintained the repose of Italy and baffled the plans of Lord Pentinck; but the

pious caste did, secretly, against me all that their hate and the wit of the English could suggest. The focus of the troubles had ramifications in France and in Switzerland. The clergy, the malcontents; and the partisans of the old régime (there were still some) united in intrigue to undermine my authority, and do me all the harm they could. They did not show themselves any more as conspirators. They had borrowed the banners of the Church and fought with its thunder, and not with the cannon. They had "Law and Order" for their rallying cry. It was an orthodox masonry which I could not reach anywhere because it was everywhere.

It was, moreover, difficult to attack these people in detail, because that would have been a persecution, and that is the weapon of the feeble and not of the strong. I thought to dissipate this party by frightening it with a great coup of authority, and it cost me nothing to attain it. I knew I could

not reach this party more surely than by separating it from the chief of the Church. I waited a long time before taking this resolution. It was repugnant to me, but the longer I waited the more necessary did the decision become. I reflected that Charles V, who was more devout and less powerful than I, had dared to take a Pope prisoner. It was not found to be a bad move, and I believed that I could attempt the same thing. The Pope was taken from Rome and conducted to Savone. Rome was reunited to France. This politic act sufficed to baffle the projects of the enemy. Italy remained calm and devoted until the last day of the Empire, but the war of the Church was pursued with the same fury. The zeal of the devotees was rekindled. It was a secret but venomous action against me. Whatever care I took the devotees arranged to communicate with Savone, and receive their instructions. The Trappists of Fribourg furthered this correspondence. They printed

it there and circulated it from curé to curé throughout the Empire. It was necessary to transfer the Holy Father to Fontainebleau and drive out the Trappists to stop these communications.

This little war had a bad effect, as I had not been able to rid it of the character of persecution. It was necessary to be severe against unarmed people, and I made victims in spite of myself. These unhappy affairs of the Church made me as many as five hundred prisoners of State. Political affairs did not yield fifty. I was wrong in this whole matter. I was strong enough to have let the disturbance run, and I did much evil because I wished to prevent it. One great project occupied the State. It seemed to me natural to consolidate my reign by placing myself *vis-à-vis* to Europe in a new relation. I expected great results therefrom.

My power was no longer contested. It only lacked the character of perpetuity,

which it could not receive so long as I had no heirs. Without such, my death could be a most dangerous moment for my dynasty, for to be complete it needs only that an authority have its epochs designated in advance.

I understood the necessity of separating myself from a woman from whom I could no longer expect posterity. I was most reluctant to leave the person whom I have always loved the most. I waited long before deciding. But she voluntarily resigned herself to it with the devotion which she always had for me. I accepted her sacrifice, because it was indispensable. The most simple policy indicated to me an alliance with Austria. The Court at Vienna was weary with its reverses. In uniting itself irrevocably with me it placed itself under the security of my guaranty. By this alliance, she (Austria) became a partner in my greatness, and I had henceforth the same interest in protecting her that I had had in defeating her.

By this alliance we formed a combination of power, the most formidable that has ever existed. We exceeded the Roman Empire.

This alliance was contracted. There remained now on the Continent outside of our combination only Russia and the débris of Prussia. The rest obeyed us. Such a great preponderance must carry discouragement to our enemies, and I was able to believe without too much prejudice that I had finished my work, and placed my throne in security against tempests. My calculation was just but passions do not calculate. All appearances were in my favor. The Continent was tranquil and accustomed to my reign. They showed it at least in their genuflections, which were so profound that a cleverer than I could have been deceived. The respect which was felt for the blood of the house of Austria legitimated my reign in the eyes of the sovereigns. My dynasty took rank in Europe, and I believed that none

JOSEPHINE DE BEAUHARNAIS
First Wife of the Emperor Napoleon the First

MARIE LOUISE OF AUSTRIA
Second Wife of the Emperor Napoleon the First

would dispute the throne to my son whom the Empress was about to bring to light. There was no trouble except in Spain, where the English had placed large forces, but this war gave me no inquietude, because I was resolved to be even more tenacious than the Spaniard, and, with time, my superiority would be demonstrated. The Empire was strong enough to sustain this war without being hurt. It hindered neither the embellishments with which I decorated France, nor the useful enterprises which she called for. I organized the institutions which must insure the power of the Empire in raising a generation to become its support.

The obligation to maintain the Continental system introduced difficulties only with those governments whose boundaries facilitated smuggling. Among these states Russia was in an embarrassing situation. Her civilization was not sufficiently advanced to permit her to excel the products of England. I insisted, nevertheless, that they be prohib-

ited. That was an absurdity, but it was indispensable to complete the prohibitive system. The smuggling grew. I had foreseen it because the government of Russia watches its country poorly, but, as one passes less easily through closed doors than open ones, the smuggling brought in much less merchandise than free entry. I thus accomplished two thirds of my purpose; still I did not complain the less. This manner of living could not last.

In fact we must clash with Russia. Since the alliance which I had made with Austria, Russia must know that our union could have no other enemies than herself, as we were masters of all the rest. It was necessary that she resign herself to a complaisant nullity, or that she should make head and maintain her rank. She was too strong to consent to be nothing. She also was too weak to resist us. But in the alternative it was worth more to assume a haughtiness of attitude than to acknowledge herself vanquished

in advance, as the latter course is always the worst. Russia decided on the former.

Accordingly I encountered an unexpected haughtiness in my relations with St. Petersburg. The confiscation of contraband was refused me. Complaint was made of the occupation of the country of Oldenburg. I replied in the same tone. It was clear that we were going to quarrel, as neither of us was patient and we had the power to measure swords.

I had great confidence in the issue of this war, as I had concocted a plan by which I hoped to terminate forever the long struggle in which I had spent my life. It seemed to me, moreover, that, having arrived at the point where we then were in our history, the sovereigns of Europe could not take a direct part in the final conflict as our interests had become identical.

The policy of the princes must incline in my favor, as my aim was not to disturb thrones, but to strengthen them. I had ren-

dered Royalty again formidable because I had work for it to do. They were sure of reigning by my alliance, equally protected in war, and in revolutions. This policy was so big that I believed the sovereigns sufficiently clear sighted to perceive it. I had no suspicion of them. Who could have guessed, in fact, that, misled by the hatred which they bore for *me,* they would abandon the cause of the thrones, and themselves again replace the revolution in their states, to be sooner or later its victims?

I had calculated that Russia was of too great a volume ever to be able to enter the European system which I had just restored, and of which France was the center. It was then necessary to put her again outside of Europe, that she might not corrupt the unity of the system. It was necessary to give this new political demarcation frontiers sufficiently solid to resist the weight of all Russia. It was necessary to put this state by force again into the place which

she had occupied one hundred years ago.

There was only the mass of my Empire which was vigorous enough to try such an act of political violence. I believed that it was possible and that it was the only way to place the world in safety from the Cossacks.

To make this plan successful it was necessary to restore Poland to a comfortable position, and beat the Russians in order to make them accept the frontier which was to be traced with the point of the sword. Russia could sign without shame the peace which was to establish her frontiers, as there was nothing outrageous to her therein. It was an acknowledgment of her power and a confession of fear upon our part. Placed thus, by my precautions, outside of the economy of Europe, and separated from this economy by three hundred thousand guardians, Russia would have renewed relations with England. She would have saved her political independence and her manner of being, in their integrity, because she would have been

as much of a stranger to us as the Kingdom of Thibet.

There was nothing else reasonable but this plan. Her ruin will be regretted sooner or later, as Europe, arranged by mutual consent under a unique system, remodeled on the form demanded by the disposition of the century, would have offered the grandest spectacle that history has ever described. But too many prejudices obscured the eyes of the sovereigns for them to be able to see the danger there where it existed. They will see it when there is no help.

I departed for Dresden. This war was going to decide, without recourse, the question which had been debated for twenty years, since this war was to be the last, because, as to Russia, the world was ended. Our enemies had only a moment, which is why they put forth their last effort. The Court of Vienna commenced by deranging my plans in regard to Poland in refusing to return what they had taken from her. I

thought myself held to my agreement with her as this sole weakness ruined my affairs, for the moment I yielded the point it was no longer possible to approach frankly the question of Polish independence. I was obliged to divide up the country upon which must depend the safety of Europe. By my weakness I aroused discontent and above all defiance in the Poles, as they saw that I sacrificed them to my advantage. I felt my error and was ashamed of it. I no longer wished to go to Warsaw, where I had nothing to do at the moment. I had no other course to take but that of trusting to victories to work out the destiny of that nation. I knew that temerity often succeeds. I thought that it would be possible to do in a single campaign what I had counted on doing in two. This promptness pleased me, as I began to have some disquietude in my character. I was at the head of an army which knew no other sentiment but that of glory, and no other fatherland but the field

of battle. Instead of making sure of my ground and advancing with certain strokes, I traversed Poland and passed the Niemen. I beat the armies which opposed me. I marched without pause and entered Moscow.

That was the end of my success, and might well have been the end of my life. Master of one capital of Russia which they left me in ashes, I would naturally conclude that the Empire would acknowledge herself beaten, and accept the fair conditions of peace which I would propose, but then it was that Fortune abandoned our cause. England concluded a treaty which rendered the Russian army disengaged. A Frenchman, dropped by chance upon the throne of Sweden, was traitorous to his fatherland, and allied himself with the enemy in the hope of bartering Finland against Norway. He himself drew the plan of defense for Russia, and England prevented her from accepting peace.

I was astonished at the delays experienced in its conclusion. The season advanced. It

became evident that peace was not desired. Then when I was certain of this I ordered the retreat. The elements rendered it very severe. The French there acquired great honor by the firmness with which they supported my reverses. Courage never left them but with life.

Shaken myself by the sight of this disaster, I had need to remember that a sovereign must never bend nor be moved to pity. Europe was still more astonished at my reverses than she had been at my successes, but I must not be mistaken at her stupor. I was about to lose half of that army which had been their terror, and the balance they might hope to defeat, as the proportion of forces was changed. I could then foresee that when the first event (astonishment) had passed, I was going to find once more against me the eternal coalition, from which I already heard cries of joy.

It is a bad moment to make peace when under defeat, nevertheless, Austria which

consoled herself in seeing me brought down (since her part in our alliance improved thereby) wished to propose peace. She offered her mediation, but it was not desired. She had killed her credit. It was then necessary to conquer anew, and I felt sure of my case when I saw France share my opinion. Never has history seen a great people under a better light. Afflicted by their losses they thought only of repairing them, and in three months had completed the task. This fact alone responded to the clamor of those men who know not how to triumph save by the disaster of their country.

France owed to me, perhaps, in part, the attitude which she preserved in her trouble, and if there has been in my career a moment which merited the esteem of posterity, it was that one, as it was most painful for me to endure.

I thus repaired to the opening of the campaign as formidable as ever. The enemy was surprised to see my eagles again so soon.

The army which I now commanded was more warlike than inured, but it carried the heritage of a long and glorious career, and I led it against the enemy with confidence. It had a great task to fulfill. It was necessary to win anew our military credit and undertake again the struggle which had been about to terminate. I yet held Italy, Holland, and the majority of the places in Germany. I had lost but little ground. But England redoubled her efforts.

Prussia made war upon us by insurrection. The princes of the Confederation held themselves ready to march to the aid of the strongest, and as I was again so, they followed my flags, but indolently. Austria tried to guard the dignity of neutrality, while Germany was overrun with firebrands who aroused the people against us. My entire system was shaken. I attacked the Prusso-Russian army and defeated it three times. As this success disarranged the plans of England they pretended to abandon all hos-

tile projects, and commissioned Austria to propose peace. The conditions were apparently endurable and many in my place would have accepted them, as they demanded only the restitution of the Illyrian provinces and the Hanse towns, acknowledgment of the sovereign independence of the kingdoms of Italy and Holland, the retreat from Spain and the return of the Pope to Rome. They would have demanded of me, moreover, to renounce the Federation of the Rhine and Swiss mediation, but orders were given to yield on these two points.

I must have been very low in their opinion, because after three victories they dared to ask me to abandon states which they no longer dared menace themselves. If I had consented to receive this peace the Empire would have sunk very fast—it could not rise. By treaty it would remain still powerful on the map, but it would, in fact, be nothing. Austria, in rising to the rôle of mediator, broke our alliance and allied herself to the

enemy. In restoring the Hanse towns, I understood that I could give and all the world would have desired to recover its independence. I created insurrections in all the reunited countries.

In abandoning Spain I would have encouraged all opposition. In giving up the crown of iron, I would have placed in compromise that of the Empire. The chances of peace looked very dark to me. Those of war might save me. It must be said that too great successes and too great reverses had marked my history to make it possible for me to put off the affair to another day. It was necessary that the great Revolution of the nineteenth century be completed irrevocably, or that it be stifled under a heap of corpses. The whole world was in court to decide this question. If I had signed the peace at Dresden I would have left it undecided, and it would have been necessary to take it up again later. It would have been necessary to recommence that long

career of success which I had already traveled. It would have been necessary to do so when I was no longer young, with a wearied Empire to whom I had promised peace, and who would have blamed one for not having accepted it. It was therefore better to profit by a unique moment when the destiny of the world depended upon a single battle, for they would have abandoned me if I had granted it. I refused the peace. As every one has seen, Austria saw only my imprudence and believed the moment favorable to range herself with my enemies. Nevertheless, I was not convinced of this defection until the last moment, but I was in a position to sustain it. My plan of campaign was made. It would have produced a decisive result.

The inconvenience of large armies is that the General in Chief cannot be everywhere. I believe that my maneuvers were the best that I have ever designed. But General van Damme quit his position, and was captured.

Hoping to make himself Marshal of the Empire, Macdonald all but drowned himself in the floods. Marshal Ney allowed himself to be soundly beaten. My plan was upset in a few hours. I was defeated. I ordered the retreat. I was still sufficiently strong to take the offensive on changing the field. I did not wish to lose the advantage of the places which I had occupied, since with a single victory I would find myself master of the North as far as Dantzig. On the contrary, I reënforced my garrisons and ordered them to hold to the last extremity, and therein they obeyed my orders.

I retired slowly with an imposing force, but I retired, and the enemy followed me with augmenting forces. But nothing reënforces battalions like success. All the hatred which time had gathered was roused up at once. The Germans wished to avenge themselves for the evils of war. The moment was propitious. I was beaten. As I had foreseen, the enemies came up out of the

ground. I awaited them at Leipsic on the same ground where they had been beaten a short time before.

Our position was not good; since we were attacked in a semicircle, even victory could not have had any great results for us. We had, in fact, the advantage the first day, but were without power to take the offensive. It was an indecisive battle, and had to be commenced over again. The army fought well despite its weariness. But then, by an act which posterity may judge as it will, the allies who were fighting in our ranks unexpectedly turned their arms against us, and we were defeated. We took the road to France, but such a great retreat cannot be executed without some disorder. Exhaustion and hunger caused many to perish. The Bavarians, after having deserted my colors, wished to hinder our retreat to France. The French passed over their bodies on reëntering Mayence. This retreat cost as many men as that from Russia.

Our losses were so great that I was myself in consternation. The Nation was disheartened by them. If the enemies had pursued their march they would have entered Paris with our rear guard. But the aspect of France intimidated them. They looked at the frontier a long time before daring to cross it. It was no longer a question of glory, but of the honor of France. That is why I counted on the French. But I was not very happy. I was badly served. I do not accuse the people, always ready to spill their blood for the Fatherland. I do not accuse them of treason, for it is most difficult to betray when one is not believed. I blame only that discouragement which is ordinarily the fruit of misfortune. I do not exempt myself from it. The discouraged man stops undecided as he sees before him only misfortune, and the worst thing in action is indecision.

I would have been able better to defy this general demoralization, and provide the

remedy myself, but I relied upon a terrified ministry where everything was badly done. The strong places were neither repaired nor munitioned because they had not been menaced in twenty years. The zeal of the citizens was unabated, but the majority of the commandants were old and infirm, who had been placed where they were to rest. Most of my prefects were timid and thought only of packing up instead of defending themselves. I would have had to change them at once in order to have a front rank of brave men, if that is what is expected in those who have to lose. Nothing was yet ready for our defense, since the Swiss delivered to the allies the passage of the Rhine. In spite of their victories the enemy had not dared to cross the frontier, and they only advanced by stealth. They were afraid to march without hesitation over the ground which they believed bristling with bayonets. They did not encounter our advance guard until Langres. Then commenced that campaign

too well known for me to repeat it, but which left an immortal name upon the handful of brave men who never despaired of the salvation of France. It gave me confidence, and I believed, after three engagements, that nothing was impossible with such soldiers.

I had still an army in Italy and strong garrisons in the North, but I had not time to bring them to my aid. It was necessary to win on the spot. The fate of Europe was concentrated upon me alone. There was nothing of importance save where I was. The allies offered me peace as they distrusted their success. After refusing it at Dresden I could not accept it at Chatillon. To make peace it was necessary to save France and to plant our eagles once more upon the Rhine.

After such a trial our arms would have been regarded as invincible, and our enemies would have trembled before the fate which gave me the victory. Still master of the

center, and the North, a single battle would have restored my ascendancy, and I would have had the glory of reverses as of victory. The result was quick. My maneuvers were successful. The enemy was turned. He lost his head. A general rout was the finish. It required but a moment more. But my fate was determined. A courier whom I had dispatched to the Empress fell into the hands of the enemy. He showed them that they were lost. A Corsican who was found in their council apprised them that prudence was more dangerous than audacity. He took the only course that I had not foreseen, as it was the only good one. He gained the advance and marched on Paris. Their free entry had been promised them but this promise would have been illusive if I had left the defense of Paris in better hands. I had confided in the honor of the Nation, and had foolishly left in charge those whom I knew to be unfit. I arrived too late to aid them, and the City which had never had to defend

either its sovereigns or its walls opened its gates to the enemy.

I have accused General Marmont of having betrayed me. I to-day render him justice. No soldier betrayed the faith which he owed to his country. It was in another class that the cowards were found, but I could not master an emotion of sadness on first seeing the capitulation of Paris signed by my old brother in arms.

The cause of the Revolution was lost, since I was conquered. It was not the Royalists, nor the cowards, nor the malcontents who had conquered me, it was the hostile armies. The allies were masters of the world, since I no longer disputed with them its empire.

I was at Fontainebleau, surrounded by a troop, faithful, but small in numbers. I could yet have tempted them with the fate of battle, as they were capable of deeds of heroism, but France would have paid too dearly for the pleasure of revenge. She

would have had the right to accuse me of her ills. I desired to be accused only of the glory with which I had borne her name. I resigned of my own accord.

They came to propose to me abdication. For my part I found that a mummery. I had abdicated the day I was defeated, but as this formality might some day serve my son I did not hesitate to sign it.

A numerous party desired that this child should ascend the throne to conserve the Revolution with my Dynasty, but the thing was impossible. Even the allies did not have the choice. They were obliged to recall the Bourbons. Each one applauded himself for having brought about their return. This return was forced. It was the immediate consequence of the principles for which they had fought for twenty years.

In taking the crown I put the throne under the protection of the people. In rendering it to the Bourbons it was placed under the protection of the successful soldiers.

This, then, was the manner of extinguishing, irrevocably, the revolutionary fire. The call of any other sovereign to the throne of France would have been nothing else but a solemn sanction of the Revolution. That is to say, an insane act in the interests of the sovereigns. I will say, moreover, that the return of the Bourbons was a blessing to France. It saved her from anarchy, and it gave her repose as it assured her of peace. It was forced between the allies and the Bourbons as they served as a mutual guaranty.

France was not an accessory to this peace as it was not in her favor but in that of the family which it pleased the allies to place on the throne. It was therefore the best manner in which France could retire from the greatest defeat that any warlike nation has ever experienced.

I was a prisoner. I expected to be treated as such; but, either by that species of respect which an old warrior inspires, or by the spirit

of generosity which pervades such a Revolution, they proposed to me to choose a retreat. The allies ceded me an island, and a title, one of which they regarded as vain as the other. They permitted me—and in this their generosity was full of nobleness—they permitted me to introduce into my company a small number of old soldiers with whom I had experienced such varied fortunes. They permitted me to introduce some of the men whom misfortune does not discourage.

Separated from my wife and my son, contrary to all human and divine law, I retired to the Island of Elba with no inkling of a project for returning.

I was only one of the spectators of the century, but I knew better than any one in whose hands Europe was going to fall. I knew that after that she would be governed by hazard. The chances of this hazard might put me again in play. Nevertheless, the inability to contribute to them prevented me from forming any plans, and I lived like

a stranger to history. But the march of events was more precipitate than I believed, and I was surprised in my retreat.

I received the papers. They advised me of the principal affairs. I endeavored to catch the spirit, through their falsehoods. It seemed evident to me that the king had known the secret of our century. He had known that the majority of France desired the Revolution. He knew by twenty-five years of experience that his party was too weak to resist this majority. He knew that the majority would ultimately make the law. To reign, it was necessary for him to reign with the majority, that is, with the Revolution. But, not being a revolutionist himself, it was necessary that the king should remake the Revolution by virtue of the Divine Right in which he shared.

The idea was ingenious. It made the Bourbons revolutionists in security of conscience, and made the revolutionists Royalists in maintaining their interests and their

opinions. There must be but one heart, and one soul in the entire Nation. That is what they repeated, but it was not true. There was, nevertheless, so much good in this combination, that France under this reign would have been flourishing in a few years.

The king would solve by a stroke of the pen the problem for which I had been fighting for twenty years, establish the new political economy in France, and cause it to be recognized without contest by all Europe. To succeed it was only necessary to be master at home.

To accomplish this great work the king had given a charter, cast in the mold in which all charters are made. It was excellent because they are all so when they can be made to operate. But as charters are only sheets of paper they are of no value except when there is an authority to defend them, and that authority was nowhere to be found. Instead of uniting them in the only hands which were responsible for them the king

allowed them to be scattered among all the parties that bore his name. Instead of there being but one chief of State there was constituted but a chief of party. Everything in France took the color of faction; anarchy supervened.

From thence there was nothing but futility and contradiction in the system of government. The words never coincided with the facts, because at the bottom of the heart the desire was contrary to the fact. The king had given the charter to prevent its being taken, but it was evident that, when the first moment was passed, the Royalists expected to retire it bit by bit because at bottom it would not go to them.

There were then placed but stepping stones in the edifice of government. The nobility had been restored, but neither prerogatives nor power had been given them. They were not aristocratic, because they were nothing in the State. They were not democratic because they were exclusive. It was

therefore a bad service which had been rendered the nobility in placing them on their feet in this manner without giving them any justification as they had been taken prisoner because they had been offensive. It was a countersense which must bring continual friction. They desired to pass the sponge over the Revolution, but they exhumed its corpse. They desired to make the Revolution of '89 go forward with the Royalists, and the counter-revolution of March 31 with the ex-conventionaires. It was desired to remake the clergy and an unfrocked monk was to serve again to raise both the throne and the altar. They performed their duties equally badly, because revolutions cannot be made to progress save with men born with them. The king must be served only with men of twenty.

They desired to maintain the Revolution and they degraded its institutions. The mass of the Nation was thus discouraged. They had been elevated with these institu-

tions, and were accustomed to respect them.

My soldiers were kept because they were feared, and they were made to pass in review before men who talked of glory while saluting Cossacks. Nobody felt any confidence in what existed, because no basis could be seen for it anywhere. It was not in the interests, because it was all compromise, neither was it in public opinion, because there was clashing, nor yet in government, for there was in the State neither arm nor will.

I was well enough informed of what passed at Vienna, in the Congress where they amused themselves aping me. I knew that the ministers of France had decided the Congress to take me away from the Island of Elba and exile me to St. Helena. I was somewhat pained that the Emperor of Russia had consented so soon to break the faith of the treaties, as I have always had much esteem for his character, but at last I learned this to a certainty and I thought to escape the fate for which they had destined me.

My weak means of defense would have been immediately destroyed. I must then try to create something great enough to render me a second time formidable to my enemies. France had no confidence at all in her Government and the Government had none in France. She thought that her interests were not those of the throne and that those of the throne were not hers. It was a mutual treason which must ruin one or the other. It was time to forestall it and I conceived a project which will seem audacious in history, but which was but reasonable in reality.

I thought to remount the throne of France. However weak my forces they were yet larger than those of the Royalists, and I had for an ally the honor of the Fatherland, which never perished in the heart of France. I confided in this support. I passed in review the little troop which I destined for such a grand enterprise. The soldiers were badly clothed, as I had not the

wherewithal to equip them anew, but they had brave hearts. Our preparations were not long as I carried only arms. I believed the French would provide us with everything. The English Colonel who sojourned near me had been transferred to Livourne, and I set sail with a good wind.

Our little flotilla experienced no accident. Our voyage lasted five days. I saw the coast of France again near the same shore where I had landed fifteen years before on my return from Egypt. As then, fortune seemed to smile upon me. As then, I returned to that land of glory to raise again the eagles and restore its independence. I disembarked without obstacle. I found myself again in France. I returned to it unfortunate. My cortège consisted of but a small number of friends and brothers in arms, who had shared with me happiness and adversity, but that was a reason for attracting the respect and love of the French.

I had no determined plan, as I had but

vague ideas of the state of things, and I awaited the decision of events. I had some plans laid out for probable cases. I had but one road to take, because I needed a base of operations. Grenoble was the most convenient place, and I marched on Grenoble as rapidly as possible, as I wished to know what I could rely on in my enterprise. The reception on the road exceeded my expectations and confirmed my project. I saw that that portion of the people, not corrupted either by interest or passion, retained the stout character which humiliation wounded. I discovered at last the first troops which they sent against me. They were my soldiers. I advanced without fear, as I was sure they would not dare to fire upon me. They saw again their Emperor marching at the head of those old masters of war who had so often traced for them the path of combat. I was still the same, as I brought back to them independence with my eagles. Who could believe that soldiers would hesi-

tate a moment between the official oaths taken under foreign colors, and the faith which they had sworn to him who came to liberate their Fatherland?

The people and the soldiers received me with cries of joy. I had only these acclamations for my cortège, but they were worth more than all the pomp for they promised me the throne.

I waited for some resistance from the Royalists, but I was disappointed, and I entered Paris without seeing them, unless at the windows. Never did an enterprise so desperate in appearance cost so little in execution. It was because it conformed to the desires of the Nation, and all must run easily when in accord with public opinion.

The Revolution terminated in twenty days without having cost a single drop of blood. The aspect of France had changed. The Royalists cried for aid to the foreigners. The Nation having come to itself regained its pride. It was free, for it was to

perform, in placing me on the throne, the greatest act of spontaneity possible to a people. I was there also by their desire alone, as I could not have conquered them with my six hundred soldiers.

They no longer regarded me as prince—they loved me as a savior. The greatness of my enterprise blotted out my reverses. It gave me the confidence of France. I was anew the man of their choice. Also, never did a whole nation, with such abandon and intrepidity, expose its entire self to so dangerous a situation. They counted neither perils nor consequences. The love of independence inflamed this people, whom history will place above all others. I had refused the peace offered at Chatillon, as I was on the throne of France, and it made me descend too low. But I could accept that which was offered to the Bourbons as I came from the Isle of Elba, since one can stop when mounting, but never when descending.

I believed that Europe, astonished at my return, and at the energy of the French people, would fear to recommence a war with a nation which had shown such courage, and against a man with a character stronger in itself than all the armies. And it would have been so had the Congress separated, and if we could have treated with the sovereigns one by one. But their self-love was excited as they were in session, and my efforts to maintain peace resulted in nothing. I should have foreseen the result and profited without delay by the first impulse of the people, to show at what point we were formidable. The enemy would have turned pale before our audacity. They saw, however, only the weakness of my hesitation. They were right, as I no longer acted true to my character. My pacific attitude lulled the Nation to sleep, as I allowed them to believe that peace was possible. Therefore my system of defense was destroyed because the means of resistance was jeopardized.

It was necessary to recommence a Revolution to give me all the resources which it created. It was necessary to stir the passions in order to profit by their blindness. Without that I could not save France. I would have desisted from the attempt to guide this second Revolution as I had done in the case of the first, but I did not like popular tumult, because there were no solid leaders, and I deceived myself by believing that one can defend the pass of Thermopylæ by loading the guns a dozen times.

I was nevertheless desirous of taking part in this Revolution, as I was aware that half measures are useless. I offered the Nation liberty as they were pleased to desire it under my first reign. This liberty produced the usual effect. Words were put in place of actions. The Imperial caste was disgusted, because I had shaken the system to which they had attached their interests. The rank and file of the Nation shrugged their shoulders as they cared little for liberty.

The Republicans defied my allurements as they were not of my nature.

Thus I myself brought about the disunion of the State. I perceived it. I counted on war to rally them. France had shown so much pride—so much contempt for the future. Her cause was so just (which is the sacred right of nations), that I hoped to place the whole people in arms with the sole cry of honor or of indignation; but it was too late. I sensed the danger of my position. I measured the attack, and the defense. They were not in proportion. I began to distrust my forces, but this was not the moment to say so. By an unhappy chance my health was deranged at the approach of the last crisis. I had but a disturbed soul in a suffering body. The armies advanced. In mine there was devotion and enthusiasm in the soldiers, but no more in their chiefs. They were wearied. They were no longer young. They had campaigned much. They had lands and palaces.

The king had left them their fortunes and their places. They came to take the adventurer's risk anew with me. They recommenced their careers, and, however much one may love life and glory, one does not love to pass it twice. It is perhaps too much to ask of human nature.

I started for General Headquarters alone, with the whole world against me. I tried to fight it. Victory was faithful to us the first day, and deceived us the second. We were vanquished and our armies destroyed in the same fields where they had commenced twenty-three years before. I could have still held on the defensive, for my soldiers would not have abandoned me. But they wanted only me alone. They demanded of France to deliver me to the enemy. It would have been an act of cowardice to force them to fight. I did not desire such a great sacrifice. I had no choice.

Having decided to surrender myself to the enemy, I hoped that they would be con-

As a child

As a young man

NAPOLEON FRANCOIS JOSEPH CHARLES
Son of the Emperor Napoleon the First and Marie Louise

tent with the hostage which I was going to place in their hands, and that they would place the crown upon the head of my son.

It was impossible to place this child on the throne in 1814. The thing would, I believe, have been proper in 1815. I do not give the reasons for this. The future will, perhaps, unveil them.

I did not quit France till the moment when the enemy approached on my retreat. As there were only French about me, I would remain in their midst unarmed. It was the last proof of confidence and affection which I could give them. It was a grand testimony which I offered to their loyalty in the face of the world.

France respected my misfortunes up to the moment when I quit her shores forever. I would have been able to pass over to America and exhibit my defeat in the New World. But after having reigned over France I would not disgrace her throne by seeking further glory.

Prisoner upon another hemisphere, I have nothing to defend save the reputation which history prepares for me. It will say that a man to whom a whole people devoted itself could not have been so destitute of merit as the contemporaries pretended.

(1)

THE END

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